THE COMMONWEAL

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THE MAN WITH THE HOE

MR. HOOVER'S first message to Congress has created a very good impression. It confined itself to the two most important matters under consideration at this special session—farm relief and tariff revision—and in both cases restated traditional Republican attitudes. Apparently no very great surprises are in store for the farmer or the consumer. McNary-Haugenism has been dropped from the list of captivating political ideas; and despite some effort to arouse Senate interest in a new debenture plan, the present House bill, which Mr. Haugen has devised to conform with administration principles, must eventually constitute the form which new legislation, if there be any, will take. The President's discussion of the tariff was more cautious. It will be difficult to arrive at a reasoned, non-partizan settlement of problems created by the existing schedules. Nevertheless Mr. Hoover stressed the important point: "In determining changes in our tariff we must not fail to take into account the broad interests of the country as a whole, and such interests include our trade relations with other countries. It is obviously unwise protection which sacrifices a greater amount of employment in exports to gain a less amount of employment from imports." Obviously the "broad interests" are not at all the same as the very "special interests" which have recently knocked in such numbers at the door of the Ways and Means Committee.

Whatever may happen to the complex economic situations covered by the twin names of "tariff" and "farm relief," it is obvious that Mr. Hoover has adopted a definite philosophy regarding them. He seeks to turn agricultural problems over to a federal farm board, which shall have for its main purpose "the reorganization of the marketing system on sounder, more stable and more economic lines." And the tariff? "The Tariff Commission," he says, "should be reorganized and placed upon a basis of higher salaries in order that we may at all times command men of the broadest attainments." Nor is the system upon which this body now proceeds at all adequate. It needs a new formula "that will insure rapid and accurate determination of needed changes in rates." In other words, complex problems like those under consideration cannot be solved in detail during congressional debate. The principle underlying the Interstate Commerce Commission needs to be developed and extended under the supervision of

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alert common sense, and with proper regard for its relations to a general and well-understood policy.

It is easy to raise the cry of "bureaucracy" against such proposals. They do imply a recognition of the necessary limits of parliamentary action, and they are not exactly an advertisement for popular referendums. But the thing which really settles the fate of a bureau or a commission is the personnel. If Mr. Hoover battles on manfully for the kind of administrative groups he wants, it will be interesting to see what manner of men he will choose for the important posts. For while the organization of federal farm boards and their equivalents in other spheres of activity would considerably lessen the pressure upon the administration, it imposes the new and by no means simple task of finding and endorsing first-class executives. How far is the belief that this can be accomplished justified by past experience? What does the record tell us? Such queries are of importance to every citizen.

WEEK BY WEEK

REPRESENTATIVE HAMILTON FISH of New York introduced a joint resolution in the House, declaring that it "be the policy of the United States of America to prohibit the exportation of arms, munitions, or implements of war to any nation which is engaged in war with another." Congress, however, is empowered to legalize exceptions to this rule, and the three things banned are carefully defined. In essence the Fish resolution is not new. It differs from Senator Capper's plan chiefly in its provision that the blanket embargo can be lifted only by an act of Congress. Armament shipments are considered as inimical to peace, rather than as potential weapons against an aggressor nation. The idea, which seems a little startling at first, is probably an advance beyond the boundaries reached by the League of Nations covenant and the Kellogg treaty. Whereas the League has the power to establish a general arms embargo, it has never had any jurisdiction over the United States. Mr. Fish's plan, if accepted, would make the attitude of this country quite clear. In practice a belligerent country outlawed by the League would probably also be one against which our treaties and arms embargo would be operative. Thus a sabre-rattling statesman might find himself eventually on something like an inaccessible island.

Another Blow at War

MORE than ten years ago Maurice Barrès headed a great campaign for the restoration to the French missionary congregations of the rights which the Combes law had abrogated. During recent weeks the government has managed to put through at least a partial reform. Nine congregations, including the very well-known Christian Brothers and Marist Brothers, have now regained the property held in sequestration and are authorized to establish the usual conventual foundations. Oddly enough, this victory could not have been gained without the assistance of prominent radical deputies whom Poincaré rallied to his support. On the other hand the world noted, with its tongue in its cheek, that M. Herriot and M. François-Albert aided a movement to restrain the religious "from speaking in the cities." The attempt to deny to Catholics a free-speech privilege upon which every radical from time immemorial has insisted vigorously is a sufficient commentary upon the partizan inconsistencies of mankind. Of course the restoration is a triumph for both France and the Church. It is a greater step toward complete mutual understanding and sympathy than anything accomplished in Paris since the close of the war.

The French Congregations

THE case for the six-hour day, which the railway brotherhoods are arguing just now, will be heard with a good deal of sympathy. The roads are operating with almost four hundred thousand fewer employees than in 1920, and there has been a decline in the average hours worked by each employee. Some part, at least, of this reduction has been made possible by the increased efficiency of the workers, for whom less work is a rather unsuitable reward. The objection is that a six-hour day can afford only temporary relief. Judging by past experience, no more than a decade would follow its adoption before the conditions now complained of arose once more. The history of the eight-hour day supports this pessimistic assertion. It went into effect late in 1917, and the result was an increase of employees which held good year in and year out until 1928. But meanwhile the railroads were investing about five billions in more powerful locomotives, more capacious freight cars, labor-saving machinery and improved road beds. Because of this they were able in 1928 to reduce their employees below the number of 1917. The adoption of a six-hour day would offset this reduction by necessitating an increase of 25 percent in man power, and such a step, according to estimates made in the current issue of Railway Age, would cost the roads about three-quarters of a billion annually. It would be reflected in higher freight and passenger rates "until railway managements could raise enough capital and make enough labor-saving improvements to again reduce the number of employees."

Six-Hour Day

WE ARE printing elsewhere in this issue Professor Etienne Gilson's exposition of the Institute of Mediaeval Studies which has been founded at the University of Toronto. It may be well to add that a syllabus of the work to be done during the coming year has been published by the Institute. The study is to be purely graduate in character and will lead to the customary higher degrees. A compe-

News from Toronto

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tent faculty has been gathered, and it is planned to add other authoritative teachers "as finances permit." One may add that these have been disposed of, from the student point of view, with highly commendable liberality. The governing committee proudly announces: "This is the first Institute of its kind on this continent or in the old world. Much work has been and is being done, in ever-increasing volume, at Munich, Quarrachi, Harvard, Louvain, Oxford, Barcelona, Paris and elsewhere. But this is the first foundation having the sole aim of trying to understand the mediaeval mind and to interpret it to the modern world." Such an endeavor ought to evoke widespread interest, even though only a few ever engage in the projected study. We feel that such an enterprise places us, once more, in spiritual debt to Canada.

NO DOUBT about it, the old notion that working his way through college helps rather than retards a student needs some clarification. It seems to us that students are offered an all too general, and undiscriminating, encouragement to take on a full program of school work while earning every penny of the amount needed for board, tuition and incidental expenses. It is the highly exceptional lad who can do this without rebelling at a system which demands so much of him. One not so gifted with stamina and energy will be neither a good student nor a good workman. If, however, he works about two hours in twenty-four in part payment of his expenses, his day is not seriously interrupted, and he is likely to take his academic opportunities more to heart because of the sacrifice which he has made in order to gain them. These and similar considerations are coming in for a good deal of discussion just now, as reports of Dean Moon's survey among students on probation at the University of Chicago show that 10 percent of undergraduate failures are caused by extra employment. The figure is not too surprising, even when one considers that the frequently decried distractions of student activities and social endeavor are shown to account for only 1 percent. For we must remember that the two classes are not evenly made up. In many of the universities of this country, 50 percent of the students are earning at least part of their way, while the opportunities for active places on the staffs of school publications, clubs and so forth are certainly limited to a lesser number.

The Earning Student

THOUGH prematurely promulgated, the news that Dr. John R. Oliver's novel, Victim and Victor, is to receive the Pulitzer Prize is nevertheless very welcome. We have several times expressed the belief that this is one of the notable books of the year, which has quietly made its way without the help of any claque. The element of intelligence seldom enters into a story to the same extent that it does here. Without being in the least highbrow, technical or pedantic, our author succeeds in reflecting his experience of men and his knowledge of the science regarding them. It is not a sophisticated novel but a very wise one. Fundamentally it remains a deeply perceptive narrative of a friendship which, though abnormal in some respects, incorporates much that is universally ideal in human affection. Years ago people used to talk very bravely about the effect which science was going to have upon the development of fiction. Well, here is a book which really manages to weld science and emotion into something like an organic unit. Doubtless it is imperfect in several respects; but one would wager that, for some time to come, it will be considered a valuable addition to American letters.

Victim and Victor

CRITICISM of the talkies comes from a new but logical source. An investigation conducted by the New York World, with the assistance of the League for the Hard of Hearing, reveals the very positive objection which this class of unfortunates entertains for sound pictures. It is based in part on the mechanical imperfection which as yet prevents proper synchronization of lip movement and sound; in part, too, on the unlovely voices and poor enunciation of the majority of movie actors, faults to which, we are told, the hard of hearing are "50 percent more sensitive than the normal of hearing." But the most interesting reason given in the answers to the questionnaire is the one which has often been voiced elsewhere on purely artistic grounds: that, whereas silent pictures employed a genuine mimetic art, the talkies are an unsatisfactory anomaly. In terms of defective hearing, this means that silent pictures offered this part of their public an entertainment which blessedly delivered them from the chief strain of their waking existence—the strain of trying to hear—while the talkies are, in the revealing phrase of one of the objectors, "the abomination that the legitimate stage is: something that we cannot enjoy with friends." Various half-hearted suggestions as to coördinating and captioning the talkies appear among the answers, but there is little doubt that these people feel that an almost ideal diversion is being taken from them. Perhaps other producers may be moved to follow the lead of Warner Brothers, who announce that each of their features is first to be made as a silent film.

Hearing the Talkies

AFTER a study of seventy-two representative universities, the Carnegie Foundation offers figures to show that the salaries of college teachers have more than doubled in recent years. For instance, the average salaries for men thirty-five years of age rose between 1913 and 1926 from $1,500 to $3,900; for men a little older, from $2,000 to $4,800; for teachers at sixty-five from $2,700 to $5,400. The fact that salaries have been doubled,

Perquisites of Professorship

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however, is not especially cheering when it is remembered that the cost of living has advanced at least 70 percent in the meantime. And the net advance is not so considerable as to encourage any candidate for professorship to expect that at its highest earning point his vocation will provide him and his family with more than the barest of luxuries. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the income is not confined to his salary. In most cases, the performance of his academic duties leaves him with time enough each day to write, to lecture independently, or to fulfil an advisorship to some business or artistic enterprise at no paltry fee. The fact that the field for these enterprises of his leisure is broadening every year has done at least as much as the enlarged scale of endowment funds in bringing him part way toward the security enjoyed by men of similar eminence in comparable professions.

Guild Gaucherie

SO FAR as acting, direction and scenic display constitute points of leadership, the Theatre Guild is undoubtedly the premier theatrical producing group of the country. It also sponsors a magazine carrying its own name, in which the astute advertisers of the country might well see an advantageous approach to a compact group of citizens. One would likewise suppose the Guild to be in a sufficiently independent position to reject those advertisements which might prove offensive to a number of readers of the Theatre Guild Magazine. It is not a little surprising, therefore, to find that the April number of this magazine shows a distinctly thin advertising lineage, and that two full pages of such advertising as it has are devoted to a particularly sensational type of book ballyhoo. The first of these pages to strike the eye offers, at a bargain price with coupon, a book called The Bible Unmasked, published by the Freethought Press Association. The publishers, pressing their message through the Theatre Guild medium, state among other things: "Once the Bible was held to be supreme in science, art, philosophy. Today we no longer accept it for any of these things. In every field of knowledge which has affected human happiness and progress, the authority of the Bible has been rejected." A final prod to interest is found in the statement that "Canadian orders will not be accepted, as this book has been prohibited in Canada."

ANOTHER full-page advertisement in the Theatre Guild Magazine features five books, the leader of which is Sex in Civilization. The themes of the other books are described in the following terse phrases: "A young aristocratic Russian girl, an émigrée in Paris, tumbles from prim respectability to the alcoholic atmosphere of a Montmartre cabaret"; and again: "Don't miss the rent party and other authentic Harlem scenes in this novel of an educated Negro girl defeated by the color line within her own race"; and again: "Recounts the adventures of an aspiring young writer who rises through boudoir wire-pulling to an hour of vertiginous triumph and then falls to disaster"; and finally: "The wit, irony and swaggering humor of the dean of French letters play upon the seventeenth-century sect of Libertines and the alluring gaiety, naughtiness and agnosticism of the age." We know of many struggling magazines which, in their earlier stages, have accepted mail-order advertisements for diamond rings, patent medicine boomings and other selected bits from that outer fringe of paid publicity generally prohibited through self-interest by established periodicals. But it is hard to believe that the Theatre Guild Magazine is so scant in resources that it is forced by economic pressure to accept a still more meretricious form of come-on advertising.

Thirty Nights in Jail

MR. JOSEPH FISHMAN of the New York City Department of Correction believes that "a more sensible attitude toward minor offenders would make it possible to reduce the jail population of the city by from 15,000 to 20,000 prisoners each year." This more sensible attitude, as Mr. Fishman defines it, amounts to the suggestion: since the trivial offender is an annoyance, let him be annoyed. Sentence him to report, once a day, to the police station nearest his home; sentence him to spend thirty nights in jail, leaving him free to work at his job in the daytime. Mr. Fishman thinks, of course, of the trivial offender's family, and the dependence placed upon his pay check. But what cruelty, in this day of punitive reform! Thirty separate mornings to bear the solicitous inquiries of fellow-employees regarding the ease of prison beds. Thirty departures to a chorus of not entirely serious well wishers. Thirty nights without a radio, phonograph, game of cards or kitchen quarrel. Worst of all, thirty transitions from the world of freedom and the State of Man to prison walls and the subjugation of the brute. Sentencing a man to a week in jail is not so bad. After two days, unless he is one of your finicky fellows, he becomes resigned to his surroundings. But this business of letting him out each morning and locking him up at night—is it not too much like the miserable routine of the stable, not to say the pen?

The Rhythm of Life

ALICE MEYNELL understood the potential immortality of titles, giving to her books names which, though almost unused, are as simple and elemental as the foundations of all days. The "rhythm of life" hums everywhere, but how to make people realize the fact is one of the great educational problems. It becomes especially baffling when you undertake the concrete job of communicating poetry. This last seems an art to so many who know only that "art is long and time is fleeting."

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And yet it is really only a vital part of the verb "to be," as Compton Mackenzie used to try so hard to show. That the point can be put across —if that phrase borrowed from modern business sledge-hammering is permissible—is clear from a recent interesting experiment. Isabel Fiske Conant gave a course in "appreciating poetry" to a group of girls, most of them less than seventeen. These children had been embarked, quite voluntarily, on a venture in imitation. The result is a little book—Scrapped Silver—which the house of Mosher had printed in its inimitable style. Reading it, one simply rubs the eyes and gradually sinks back into a mood of pleasant approval. Many contemporary writers of verse might well be proud of any lyric in this little collection—and envious, too, of the freshness which is diffused over the whole. Doubtless few of these young women will earn their future bread with rhymes; but the fact that they have done just this is a privilege which many educators might well strive to share with them for the benefit of their flocks.

THE wit who said that many a situation had been saved by not being defined might have been thinking of American feminism. True, we have always had large, bright generalizations about the right of woman to lead her own life—meaning, of course, to narrow her scope to the confines of a career. But the mass of American women workers have heretofore resisted doctrinaire feminism of the extremer sort, and have combined a formidable economic and social power with a conservative and inclusive personal philosophy. This compromise has seemed, on the whole, the healthiest adjustment it has been possible for them to make to the pressure, psychological and economic, which drives such large numbers of them out into the world in our time. It has preserved for them the most substantial opportunities to be found anywhere today, and has preserved, too, the outline of an older career of honor—the home—into which they might pass without theorizing or apology. An article from the pen of Emily Newell Blair (the Outlook and Independent, April 24) makes one wonder, with a start, if the compromise is breaking up. Are successful careers producing, and in those significant women who are superior as women, that specialist or worker's consciousness toward life which the mere doctrinaire has been unable to impose?

A New Feminist

MRS. BLAIR'S remarks proceed from a mind so free from faddism, so sanely and genially responsive to the complex demands of life, that she cannot be called anything but old-fashioned. Her years of writing and public service (recently she was made vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee) have not interfered with her duties as wife, mother, home-maker, neighbor, and nothing is clearer in her musings on this busy life than her pride in having kept these relationships intact. Yet it is her conclusion that a feminist—that is, a woman with a career—cannot remain dominantly interested in the home; and it is her belief, quite unequivocally implied, that a woman capable of a career is entitled to it. In smaller cities, she notes, feminists are increasingly at a loss for stimulus and relaxation in the society of home-makers. The remedy is—not some attempted rapproachement, as one might perhaps expect, but what amounts to the calm recognition of specialization and difference: let feminists either move to cities large enough to enable them to flock with their kind, or abide in patience the growth of a sustaining tradition—a tradition, that is, of women explicitly separated from the home—on their own native soil. This is definition with a vengeance. If women of obvious sense and humanity, seasoned by a full life, are actually beginning to feel this way, what will become of Woman the Universalist, the balance-wheel of the world?

THE appeal for New York charities, which Cardinal Hayes launched with a moving address, is a cry for help that should stir men everywhere. To exemplify Christianity means, these days, anything but a comfortable sinking back into one's own life. Thousands who dwell in social darkness, stumbling with burdens far too great to bear, must not find the Church a closed inn or a place barred against refuge. New York has set an example. That it will do its best again this year no one doubts; and the assurance will have a beneficial influence upon people everywhere.

Out of Many Hearts.

ONCE more Spaulding's official is being thwacked in the general direction of the farthest fence. Somehow romance continues to adhere to the old game, despite our realization that the players are keeping an eye on the manager, who in turn is fastening his gaze upon the crowd. This last promises to remain faithful, and even to wax a little larger than has been customary recently. Pennant hopes have been revived in various sections. A real fight is, if one may credit the gentlemen of the sporting page, in the offing. Meanwhile the moralist need take no alarm. Possibly there is such a thing as a religion of sport, but its admiration of the body is quite harmless and non-heretical, at least when compared with sundry other forms of activity more or less closely associated with breathing exercises or cosmetics. One doubts that the body figures very largely in the fan's outlook at all. Some of the diamond heroes are weazened or angular fellows, who would look far from their best in Norfolk attire. What the man in the bleachers continues to applaud is the intelligence which he discerns, canny and courageous, behind the game. It may be a rather undeveloped demonstration of reason. But it is reason all the same, and we are glad it comes in for a modicum of glory.

Play Ball

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COMPARATIVE WAGES

IN THE past, owners of southern textile mills have had a ready justification for the wretched wages which they pay. With Mr. J. A. Baugh, of Gastonia, North Carolina, they have said that labor in their districts must choose between farming, which pays poorly and cramps the gregarious style of man, and mill work, which pays no better, but which offers the social advantages of town life. They have pointed to the fact that every year has seen more men descending from their mountain farms, and to the resistance which these workers have offered union organizers, as evidence of a general industrial content.

But the strikes this spring have shown on what insecure foundations that content was built. The comparison between mill work and farming which was the basis of the employers' argument was never valid. True, when measured by the year, the average farm income is no larger than what the mills offer; but when computed by the working hour, it has a considerable advantage. The United States Labor Department is authority for figures which show that in North Carolina where wages are best, the average sixty-hour week returns $17.41 to men, and $14.62 to women. In Alabama, where wages are poorest, the average for men is $14.58, and $11.88 for women. Now the income for the small-area farmer in these states is estimated at about $700 per year, or not much less than the mill hand is getting. But where the mill hand has been working ten hours a day throughout the year, the farmer has not worked for more than six months, at most, on such a schedule. The rest of the year he has had leisure for hunting and fishing, which improve his larder; or for moonshining, which enlarges his purse. For a week of solid work, then, his farm pays him something close to $25, but who shall estimate the products of his leisure?

Since the strikes have been assuming serious proportions, more than one employer has been heard to say that he is willing to pay higher wages, but that he cannot afford to take the initiative and place himself at a disadvantage in an industry so highly competitive. It is a very real difficulty, but if the manufacturers are unable to meet on it, the United Textile Workers, associated with the American Federation of Labor, are prepared to help them to an understanding. This group is invading the field at a time when locals of the communist union known as the National Textile Workers are beset with difficulties, and yet when the temper of the workmen is more congenial to organization than ever in the past. A series of conferences is planned to entrench unionism in the South, and at the first of these, held recently in Greensboro, President McMahon of the United Textile Workers, by speaking much of "conciliation" and "agreement," plainly bid for support from the manufacturers and from groups which are sympathetic with the workers but hostile to the National Textile union—up to this time their only organization. Newspaper reports are sceptical regarding the stability of any such alliance Mr. McMahon may make. The impression seems to prevail that any encouragement he may receive from the higher ups will be to them in the nature of a temporary expedient, useful in laying out the communists, without giving Mr. McMahon's gentlemen a toe-hold. For surely they are aware that while Mr. McMahon in Greensboro speaks of "agreement," Federation President Green in Elizabethton dedicates his resources to the purpose of making southern wages equal northern.

Reluctantly as some of the employers may view advances of the United Textile Workers, which represents so much more in the way of power than any independent union, it will be difficult to combat its growth. No opposition can depend, as heretofore, upon the silent partnership of the hands. Those who are from the mountains, especially, will not be so easy to persuade again of the iniquity of northern-bred organizers, now that they have learned how their wages compare with those of the North, and have had time to meditate fully upon the social advantages which are inherent in town life.

NATIONAL BED-ROCK

IN ONE important respect the ideas of Mr. Coolidge appear to have been superseded. It will be remembered that a great deal of his earlier presidential oratory was devoted to a defense of what are termed "state rights"—commonwealth privileges often neglected, sometimes glibly mentioned, and rarely understood. Apparently the government has turned aside completely from this interesting educational problem and is concentrating upon making itself effective and efficient. The influence of enforcement in its various phases is, of course, primarily responsible for this decision. It is just here that the present conflict between states and the federal government is occurring. Police power in general has been a constant source of friction in the past, but the new uses to which that power has been extended are so widely criticized that a serious clash might result if the country were not so compactly organized, intellectually, by its favorite economic slogans. Theoretically the clash does exist, as President Nicholas Murray Butler has frequently and vigorously declared.

What does it mean? Essentially this: a departure from something far more important than the letter of the constitution, a something which may be termed "the fundamental formula" of the nation. Curiously enough this deviation is probably more noticeable to Catholics than to other citizens, for the reason that they see it in the light of peculiar political experiences. That the Church could flourish in this new republic, apart from the props and stays devised by old-world legalists, seemed incredible to many; and even today you will find people who should know better, Hilaire

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Belloc among them, asserting that there is something fundamentally "heretical" in our national organization. But the American Catholic does not cease to shrug his shoulders at all this, because he has seen and known the thing as it actually is. He is a constitutionalist. He concedes that deterioration may set in, that ruinous changes may end in catastrophe. But he is fully conscious of the circumstance that a return to sanity after such potentially deplorable developments would mean simply a return to the constitution.

The Catholic understanding of American law has never been expounded so well as in Orestes Brownson's The American Republic. Naturally some of its illustrative material, compiled as it was immediately after the Civil War, is out of date. One grants also that the writing is a trifle dull, and that some of the author's deviations into theology may need revision. But fundamentally it remains a remarkable book, and the prevailing oblivion of it is unfortunate. We have been reminded of it again by Miss Elizabeth Corrigan, a Webster College girl, who has written an excellent summary of the Brownson's views. And it may be pertinent to see what the old Boston sage thought of those purely constitutional questions.

To Brownson the constitution was remarkable primarily for two reasons. It incorporated perfectly the notion of sovereignty which is the divine origin of all government, and it settled the practical problems in a manner not only daringly original but also inimitable elsewhere. America became a territorial democracy—a nation in which the people ruled by being identified with a given territory. This, in turn, is of two kinds: local and central, the relations between which have been adjusted with transcendent skill. "Great Britain and other European states," said Brownson, "may sweep away all that remains of feudalism, include the whole territorial people with the equal rights of all in the state or political people, concede to birth and wealth no political rights, but they will by doing so only establish either imperial centralism, as has been done in France, or democratic centralism, clamored for, conspired for and fought for by the revolutionists of Europe. The special merit of the American system is not in its democracy alone, as too many imagine; but along with its democracy, in the division of the powers of government between a general government and particular state governments, which are not antagonistic, because they act on different matters, and neither is nor can be subordinated to the other." Grateful for this blessing as Brownson was, and nearly certain that it could not be transmitted to any other land, he remained deeply aware that wrong conceptions of democracy were tugging at the constitutional norm, and that the Civil War had been only the first great demonstration of what could happen if the solidarity of the national system were disrupted.

With especial mindfulness of contemporary circumstances, Miss Corrigan makes the following deductions, all of them probably correct, from the Brownsonian doctrine: "The line that distinguishes the general from the state government is that which distinguishes the general relations and interests from the particular relations and interests of the people of the United States. The state government governs supremely the people of its own particular state in all that pertains to their particular or domestic rights. Both powers, national and state, are sovereign, and neither is derived from the other nor subordinate to it. Each derives its power from the same authority. Neither must yield to the other because each has its distinct field and is subject only to the convention [the Congress]. These divisions of the powers of government, rendered possible and practicable by the original unwritten constitution of the people themselves, is the American method of safeguarding against centralism. The general government, according to the constitution, can never oppress the people as individuals or usurp their rights, because it is without such jurisdiction. Nor are the state governments capable constitutionally of weakening the general authority or of oppressing the people in their general rights. But the constitution is subject to abuse; and when its principles are violated, that act involves the right of others and is a step toward altering the most precious heritage of the American people."

If one accepts these simply stated views, one will agree with Brownson that the Civil War epoch was the result not so much of "economic antagonism" as of a twofold disregard for constitutional principle. The southern states were wrong in retreating from centralism into confederation; the North erred in attempting to settle the problem of slavery with national power. And one may, perhaps, add that the northern victory tended, in a measure, to make citizens overemphasize the federal government. The original balance is far more perceptible in practice than in theory. Constitutional amendments designed to affect prematurely the status of the Negro have been shattered to bits against the wall of sectional southern feeling. Now the supreme ascendancy attained by centralization may be seen in prohibition, which has raised the old issue of state rights but has not yet clarified it. When the present fierce debate is ended, there might conceivably begin a pilgrimage back to the original, "providential" formula.

It is doubtful, however, if very much fundamental thinking about government or philosophic principles is being done. Contemporary scepticism is nowhere more marked than in the realm of politics, which very many have reduced to terms of personalities or of facts empirically gathered. But the injection of religion into the recent campaign may eventually have this good effect, at least, that it will force large numbers of people to reflect earnestly upon how government influences other things than the stock exchange. If that be true the good old book of Orestes Brownson will be endowed with a new actuality.

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THE DILEMMAS OF THE LAW

By ELMER MURPHY

Campaigns and virile personalities have combined to render Americans somewhat forgetful of the distinction which the constitution makes between the legislative and executive functions of the government. What is the legislative function of the President? Mr. Murphy discusses this question in the following paper, but is interested primarily in studying the answer which Mr. Hoover has arrived at. Though what follows was written immediately before the sending of the President's first message to Congress, it offers, we believe, a commentary upon that address.—The Editors.

NOT unlike several of his predecessors, President Hoover has come face to face early in his administration with the perplexing question—What is the legislative function of the chief executive?

It is all very well for presidential candidates to make sweeping proposals during the campaign. None has been deterred from suggesting a variety of remedies for national ills by the prospect of constitutional obstacles lying in the White House path. If they are not speaking for themselves, they are speaking for their parties, and it is the proper business of political parties to enact or repeal laws upon which the electorate might look with favor or disfavor. But once safely installed in the White House, Presidents have a fashion of treading softly on the dangerous ground of legislation. President Hoover has, so far, been no exception to the rule.

For this caution there are two good reasons. One is that there is no constitutional warrant for presidential law-making. The other is that Congress jealously guards its dignity and clings to the tradition that it is the greatest law-making body in the world. What the constitutional fathers thought about it there is not much doubt. The idea uppermost in their minds, which they formulated at the very beginning of the memorable document they drafted—in Section I, Article I, immediately following the brief preamble, was this:

> All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

Enumerating in Article III the specific powers of the President they authorized him to "give to Congress information of the state of the union" and added: "he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed." Nowhere in this charter is it stated or implied that the chief executive shall suggest to Congress what laws it shall pass or, by the same token, what laws it shall repeal. Even the veto power is restricted to taking or leaving what Congress sends from the Capitol. He cannot approve what he considers the good in a measure and consign the rest to the waste-basket.

President Hoover, from the time he stepped into the White House, seemed to accept this interpretation without question. Even as a candidate he made his promises with an eye to the difficulties of fulfilment in the event of his election. He suggested the remedy but never prescribed the dose. In the period since his inauguration he has said much about enforcing laws and little about making them—to the obvious satisfaction of the more ardent of the prohibition advocates who seem to think they have found a powerful defender of the principle dear to their hearts: that the enactment of a law invests it with a sanctity before which all must bow in reverence. He turned a deaf ear to the proponents of farm relief legislation who looked to him for guidance. Congress had passed the Volstead Act; it was not for him to question its wisdom. Upon Congress rests the constitutional responsibility of drafting a farm relief bill, if it sees fit to pass one. The job of the chief executive is to enforce laws, not to make them.

But, if this is the animating philosophy behind the Hoover administration, his own consistency has led him into a pitfall. The security safeguarded by constitutional bulwarks has been rudely disturbed by the slow march of time. Congress had approved the national-origins plan of immigration restriction—that is, the admission of aliens into the United States in the proportion that their national stock bears to the total of the conglomerate population. President Hoover, in the rôle of candidate, had in this one case, at least, been specific. He had denounced the plan and said in so many words that it should be repealed. In the closing days of the expiring Congress a resolution to that effect was lost in the inevitable end-of-the-session jam and President Hoover, by advice of his Attorney-General, found himself under the disturbing necessity of proclaiming the new quotas upon which he had frowned.

Obviously there was nothing else for a President to do. There might be some doubt as to the part he is to play in legislation, but there is none whatever as to the obligation of enforcing the laws Congress has passed on to him, unless he chooses to veto them. In this instance President Hoover did not have the chance.

Now the question arises, is the President to continue to enforce laws which he regards as unwise, without making some effort to have them repealed by constitutional means? Does the presidential candidate who suggests legislative remedies for the ills which beset the nation obligate himself to compound and administer the dose so far as he can, when he is elected; or is he merely speaking for his party ad-

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herents in Congress who can, and very often do, snap their fingers at the commands of party leaders? Is the President, by reason of constitutional limitations, compelled to do a task he regards as worse than futile without a word of protest to those who have decided that it should be done?

There seems to be no way out of the White House dilemma if President Hoover continues to stick to the letter of the constitution. It is a presidential prerogative to report on the state of the nation, but the state of the nation appears not to be involved in the national-origins plan unless the President chooses to say that the enforcement of it will lead to the revival of the animosities which immigration restriction, especially of the discriminatory kind, is sure to arouse. That is a difference of opinion with Congress as to what will happen rather than a report on what has happened.

President Hoover has been consistent. He has declared that the Eighteenth Amendment constitutes "a great social and economic experiment," and that the enforcement statutes must be obeyed. He has denied the right of anyone to destroy the purposes of the constitution by indirection. What is to be done if he arrives at the conclusion that the great experiment is unworkable, is another question. Is he, in that event, to report the situation to Congress, relying upon it to repeal the laws or to take refuge behind the constitutional defense that he has no choice in the matter? In the light of the meagre precedent afforded by the present administration he might be expected to choose the latter course. There is probably less evidence that the national-origins plan is unworkable or will lead to disturbing consequences than that the Eighteenth Amendment is a prolific source of trouble. It may reasonably be inferred that he does not like the one and that he does like the other, but that has nothing to do with his inclination to enforce both.

The distinction might be illuminating to those who take it for granted that, because the President shows a disposition to enforce the law, he is to be regarded as an avowed champion of it. Such an assumption by the more enthusiastic drys probably led to the White House reminder that "no drastic or dramatic" prohibition drive is contemplated. The President evidently sticks by his dictum that the Eighteenth Amendment is a noble experiment but an experiment that might turn out badly—in which event we are just where we started, because it is to be enforced none the less.

No one doubts that the President must enforce the laws. The perplexing question is what he is to do with a law that proves to be bad. There is no constitutional warrant for his stepping beyond the border of law enforcement—a safe refuge from the annoyances of law-making. But this is one of those political conventionalities of no greater importance from a practical view-point than the black gowns worn by the Justices of the Supreme Court when they sit in judgment upon their lofty tribunal. President Hoover has been close enough to the legislative machine to know what makes the wheels go round. He is well aware that the success or failure of his predecessors has depended not upon their ability to enforce laws but upon their ability to induce Congress to enact them—to follow the legislative paths they charted. President Wilson issued orders, President Harding cajoled, President Coolidge followed the safer course of holding up a warning finger if the legislature threatened to get off the track—by too indiscriminate tax-cutting, for example—but their purposes were identical. In other words, history bristles with illustrations of presidential interference with legislation.

Constitutional ties that bind the hands of the chief executive have been loosed by extra-constitutional means. If it is the purpose of the constitution to keep the legislative and executive functions separate and distinct, it is no less the purpose of party government to bring them together. This probably accounts for the condemnation of party caucuses early in the political history of the country as conspiracies and cabals. There is nothing in the constitution to prevent President Hoover and the Senate and House majority leaders from sitting down at the same table and discussing what laws might be needed for the promotion of national welfare, and it may be taken for granted that in any such gathering members of Congress will forget their dignity and lend a willing ear. Whether their followers on Capitol Hill will show the same willingness is another matter. In these days parties are organizations for winning victories at the polls, not for carrying out legislative programs. When the candidates are safely in their seats they have a fashion of forgetting the party promises which got them there, and looking only to their constituencies and the next elections. It is not the business of the President, from the constitutional view-point, to lay out legislative programs. It is decidedly his business, from the extra-constitutional view-point, to lay them out.

President Hoover might elect to stand upon constitutional ground by declining to suggest what kind of measures Congress should enact to relieve the distress of the farmer, to regulate oil production, to adjust the tariff to changing economic needs. Congress, too, when its convenience requires it, can display a much-ruffled dignity when such suggestions are forthcoming. But the successful Presidents are those who have wielded the big stick over Congress. The public naturally looks to the White House as the citadel of its rights because it elects the Presidents. Congress, on the contrary, is elected by 483 constituencies, many of which are as far apart politically as the poles. Congress is a welter of opinion; the President is an individual and his mind is his own.

What President Hoover thinks, therefore, of laws that have been enacted or should be enacted or repealed will weigh heavily on the congressional scale.

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In the light of experience, Presidents who content themselves with carrying out the constitutional injunction of enforcing the laws, leaving to Congress the task of enacting or repealing them, will probably fall, in the public estimation, far short of the standards of leadership the public has set for its chief executives. President Wilson, President Roosevelt and many others did not hesitate to "swing around the circle" in an effort to induce the people to bring their influence to bear upon Congress to further the enactment of certain legislation.

What President Hoover will do time will tell. He has not yet had opportunity to take the measure of congressional opposition or to determine the legislative strategy of the administration. But this much is certain: the enforcement of a law by the chief executive is not to be taken as an indication that he approves the purposes for which it was enacted or that the policy of which it is an expression lies close to his heart. President Hoover might enforce the prohibition laws to the best of his ability, not because he likes prohibition but because law enforcement is a constitutional obligation. This does not mean necessarily that he favors larger appropriations for enforcement or more drastic punishment for violators. How far he will go to bring about the enactment of laws that he considers necessary and the repeal of laws that he considers bad, the record of his administration will disclose—and that record is yet to be written. It is inconceivable, however, that a chief executive who has laid so much stress upon the responsibilities of leadership will stop short of discharging those responsibilities now that they have been laid upon his shoulders.

By laying stress upon law enforcement it might be President Hoover's purpose to serve notice upon Congress that it will be held accountable for the laws it makes, and making a law is only a part of the process of curing national ills by statutory remedy. Congress has a way of proclaiming its virtue by passing a bill, sometimes without any very definite idea of what will happen if its mandate is carried out literally. The anti-trust laws constitute a formidable weapon, but their efficacy depends very largely upon the discrimination exercised by the executive branch in wielding it. Doubtless there are other laws which are not always applied because they would affect disastrously the just as well as the unjust. Precedents could be found for the attitude of public prosecutors who invoke the prohibition laws only to punish the criminal bootleggers. If the law-enforcement investigation has no other effect than to convince Congress that the statutory remedies it compounds must be administered to the sick and the well alike, it will have been worth the trouble it has taken. Probably the chief executive will be relieved of the disagreeable necessity of determining when a law should or should not be enforced and Congress will be encouraged to measure the value of legislative remedies, not in the light of the demands of insistent minorities, but in the light of their effect upon the entire public.

MEDIAEVALISM IN TORONTO

By ETIENNE GILSON

ON SEPTEMBER 29, the feast of Saint Michael, an Institute of Mediaeval Studies will be formally opened at Saint Michael's College in the University of Toronto. This academic event will not affect in the slightest way the general course of affairs in the United States or in Canada, and the newspapers are not likely to pay much attention to it. There are, nevertheless, a few reasons why American scholars in general and Catholic scholars in particular should take some interest in it.

The Institute of Mediaeval Studies is essentially a concentrated effort to recover a civilization and culture which have been, to a great extent, lost. The last fifty years have seen a revival of interest in the study of mediaeval philosophy. This is true of German and French universities, and generally speaking of European countries, where several collections and many magazines are exclusively devoted to that branch of historical research; but it is almost equally true of America. Harvard University, for instance, one of the foremost centres of learning in the whole world, has regularly called for the ten last years a professor whose special task was the teaching of mediaeval philosophy. It is noteworthy, by the way, that, considering Catholics as the born interpreters of their own tradition, Harvard has always selected its professor of mediaeval philosophy from Catholic scholars qualified for that teaching.

Despite this growing interest in patristic and mediaeval studies, it is a fact that nowhere in the world is there any place especially organized and equipped with a view to promoting that blend of studies. What Saint Michael's College is now trying to organize is precisely a regular laboratory for mediaeval research, a place where beginners will find a general initiation into mediaeval thought and life, while advanced students or even young masters will be initiated into personal research work. What reasons is it possible to give to justify such a foundation?

To that question there are at least two distinct answers, according as we look at it from a non-Catholic or from a Catholic view-point. To the non-Catholic, mediaeval studies are interesting, and in a way necessary, for merely humanistic reasons. As there is an Egyptian, a Greek, a Roman archaeology, there must be a mediaeval archaeology that keeps alive for us the

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meaning and gives us a proper understanding of the masterpieces left us by the men of these times. The middle-ages have left us magnificent memorials in architecture, in stained glass, in sculpture, in literature, in philosophy; it is impossible to leave them unexplained —not to introduce to their meaning the minds of modern men.

This is the more impossible as most of the philosophical, ethical, political and artistic ideals that are commonly labeled as modern are, in fact, as distinctly mediaeval as the Gothic towers of Princeton and Yale, not to say anything of the skyscrapers of New York and Chicago. Whether we be aware of the fact or not, we are living on a capital of civilization that was stored up for us during the so-called dark ages. As the syllabus of the new Institute aptly says: "We could not possibly be anything like what we are, had we not received an immense heritage from the people of those centuries."

It might give us some idea of our debt to the middle-ages if we tried to imagine what the world would have been without them. Suppose that at some time, say in the sixteenth century, a great catastrophe had wiped out every vestige of mediaeval culture; that no men, no books, no buildings—nothing remained. Suppose further that, after such a calamity, some race of men that had not come in contact with the previous civilization were left to build up by their own efforts Europe and the western world. What would they have accomplished in 400 years? Compare your picture of the result with the world today, and the difference is the middle-ages.

No doubt the recognition of the greatness of such a civilization, and of how much of it has been lost, was the main incentive that prompted the building of the Mediaeval Academy of America, where under the guidance of internationally known scholars such as Edward Kennard Rand, Charles Homer Haskins and Ralph Adams Cram, every department of mediaeval life is carefully and successfully studied. The very names of these men are proof that no specifically Catholic interests are necessarily involved in mediaeval researches. The publicly avowed purpose of the Academy is that of encouraging the study of all phases of mediaeval civilization; and the official publication, Speculum, is one of the best-known examples of how to do it. With a distinctly stronger emphasis on the history of ideas, the Institute of Toronto will simply try to carry on the program set forth by the Mediaeval Academy of America.

After all, nothing is more sensible. Granted that we are living on a certain tradition, it looks quite a useful thing to know what, exactly, that tradition is. Now it is a fact that philosophy and theology were the very core of mediaeval civilization; in the Sums of theology and there only shall we be able to find a clear and complete expression of the tradition we want to know. We are therefore in need of scholars especially trained in patristic and scholastic studies, and as we cannot have these scholars unless we have a place to train them, the Institute organized by the Basilian Fathers in Saint Michael's College is in itself an absolute necessity.

On the other hand, what is to other men but of human interest is to all Catholics of vital interest. Everybody knows that, in the works of Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas, Catholic thought has crystallized itself, justified itself and found an expression of itself that can be considered as definitive. No doubt we have a right, even a duty, to promote further their traditions, but the first condition of furthering a tradition is to stick to it. A Catholic thinker should be, as it were, so wholly permeated with mediaeval thought that anything he says or does, even though it looks or is new, should be but a natural, immediate and spontaneous expression of that everlasting tradition itself. This, for Catholics, is the only possible way to be at one and the same time conservative and creative. Now, the least that can be said is that we are very far from such an ideal. Thomas Aquinas is the official Doctor of the Catholic Church; how many Catholics are there in America that have read a single line of Saint Thomas? We never read him because we do not know how to read him, and we do not know how to do it because we have not been taught how to do it. And here is probably the root of the evil: teachers themselves have first to be taught. Before introducing others to mediaeval studies, they have to be introduced to them. To provide schools and universities in America with teachers well trained in the exposition and interpretation of the great scholastic doctors and of the Fathers of the Church is to be the main aim and purpose of the new Institute in Toronto.

As we are now not contemplating dreams but realities, it may be of interest to glance at the calendar of the Institute for the academic year 1929-1930. Six professors will give two series of courses. Those who want an introduction to patristic and scholastic studies will find a general survey of that field distributed among five introductory courses: mediaeval Latin; the history of the Church; the Greek philosophical background of patristic and mediaeval thought; the history of patristic thought from the second to the ninth century; the history of mediaeval philosophy from the ninth to the fifteenth century. Besides, introductory courses on Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas will be regularly given every year, or at least every other year. As to advanced students, they will find research courses in patristic thought: Saint Gregory of Nyssa and Saint Gregory the Great; mediaeval philosophy: the thirteenth-century Oxford School; the psychology of Saint Thomas Aquinas; the history of Christian political thought (development of the mediaeval theory of Church and state); the history of Christian social thought (interest, slavery, law, wealth, charity, war, labor). These hints will suffice to show what spiritual as well as scholarly interests are at

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stake in the new foundation. I, personally, know the place; I know the men, and I venture to say that there will be in them no lack of competence or of devotion to their tasks. The library and facilities for research are as yet quite modest; from the start, however, the students will find equipment, especially patristic and scholastic collections, far beyond their present needs.

We are planting; we are confident that God will give the increase. There is absolutely no reason why Catholics should not do as creditable work as any other scholars in the world, and there are many reasons why they should take a lead in this particular field. Our understanding of the middle-ages will require an understanding of the minds of the men of those ages. We must enter their souls and look around, and then look out upon the world and other men, seeing as they saw. Indeed, it appears as if religion more than anything else—and certainly nothing that excludes religion—can explain the wonderful beauty of mediaeval art and mediaeval life. Since this is so, who is equipped so well as Catholics to understand the middle-ages and make them understood by others? The spirit of the Institute will be one of humility, honesty and careful work; above everything else, it will be one of love for truth, which is but another name for God.

HAVE WE A CRITIC?

By THOMAS L. MASSON

WHAT is a critic? He may be defined as a man who informs you about a subject in such a way that you are able to balance its perfections against its imperfections and thus form an essentially correct estimate of it. Does such an individual exist in America? I doubt it.

Does he exist in England? Arnold Bennett exalts the Russians, declaring that Dostoievsky has produced the finest novel in the world. Almost in the same breath he excoriates Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse—and it takes the French Prize. George Moore excoriates Thomas Hardy with enormous Celtic scorn. Bernard Shaw says he is better than Shakespeare, praises Ibsen, Nietzsche. Rebecca West, who began her career in England by writing an abnormally clever skit about Henry James, is hired by the Herald Tribune to be its leading book reviewer for a season. She visits this country, tours it, learns its lingo and writes criticisms of the American women who have entertained her, for Harper's Magazine. Gilbert Chesterton lectures here on the unintelligence of the educated, and writes delightful essays about everybody.

In this country H. L. Mencken is the most notorious, the most unreliable, with the exception of Upton Sinclair, and the most ignorant. William Lyon Phelps is too good-natured. Ernest Boyd is perhaps our best critic of French literature. Joseph Collins—our only doctor who knows how to write with the exception of Logan Clendening—is alluring, ingenuously sexy, urbane and pathologically charming. George Jean Nathan has no sympathy with the things he hates, but has high illuminations. Sherwood Anderson has reduced personal humility to a vulgarism, and made five gods out of his senses. H. W. Boynton is reliable and charmingly dull so that nothing he writes makes the slightest dent. Thomas Beer, as a critic, is secretly afraid he will not convey the impression that he knows what he is criticizing. Agnes Repplier, our best woman essayist, is the most penetrating of all. Heywood Broun has created a false personality which he sits on his knee every day and ventriloquizes with. He tried acting and failed; he tried book-writing and succeeded moderately. As a genius of the ephemeral he is unequaled. E. W. Howe, the Kansas philosopher, is no philosopher, but an old crank with a delightful, always unformed style and scholarship so limited that it does not interfere with his common sense, and as he is utterly devoid of good taste, everything he writes is worth reading.

I have left out one who is the best of all. He was born in London in 1872. He draws and writes. His caricatures are masterpieces. His criticisms are profoundly superficial. He has comedy, humor, satire, in equal proportions. What he has written about Swinburne, once read, can never be forgotten. His last book, A Variety of Things, contains a satire called T. Fenning Dodworth which is head and shoulders above anything else written in 1928 (as a matter of fact, he wrote it in 1922): Max Beerbohm.

There are naturally, on both sides of the water, other critics. I have named only a few, but the leaders. Like Socrates's gadfly, they are highly important, because they not only keep us stirred up to a more or less personal interest in art and literature, but by this challenge to the national intelligence, tend in the long run to raise the standards of taste, in which there is a vast room for further improvement. The fact that a critic is prejudiced is nothing against him. Indeed it may be his strongest point. I do not see how anyone can object to what Ernest Boyd writes of his hatred for Dickens. I confess that at the first blush it made me indignant, and I got Dickens down and began to read him over. This was an excellent thing, and Boyd made me do it. I saw then what he meant, and saw equally that he was wrong. That did not make his criticism any less valuable.

Quite possibly the fact that a critic is unreliable makes him all the more valuable, because, aside from the point I have named, there is a certain kind of

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courage in it which serves as good illustration. Let us, as examples, take two opposites, Bruce Barton and Upton Sinclair. Barton is, as a critic, 100 percent minus. If not a sweet singer, like Edward Guest, he is a balm-spreader of the first water. On the other hand, Upton Sinclair does not care how much of an ass he makes of himself, or how nasty he is about it, so long as he can get anybody to listen to him. Most of the people who read Barton have already agreed with him before they have read him, and those who do not agree with him never would read him, so what he writes makes no difference. But with Upton Sinclair, the fact that no sane person could agree with him gives his work an importance that Barton never could attain.

Baron Von Hügel, in his Letters, published last year, gives a rule for criticism I think unequaled. He says that you should always begin with praise. There is always something about anyone that is good. Start there. This gives you a background upon which to raise your issues. Nothing can be done by the poor victim. You have acknowledged his perfections, which shows that you are unprejudiced, that cryptic thing "sincere," or else it shows that nothing can be done to prove your insincerity, because there is the praise. Naturally—in the beginning—it must (as Disraeli said of Victoria) be laid on with a trowel. You cannot wabble. The less you wabble, the more unstinting you are in your initial admiration, the more you can—later—punch your victim in the jaw.

But even this process is much more cruel when it has been refined. And the chances are that when you start to praise, you will keep on praising until your very defense of your victim is the cruelest thing that could be done to him. If you think that I have exaggerated the importance of this method, read what Max Beerbohm has written of an evening with Matthew Arnold. He says nothing against Arnold. He tells how Arnold acted, what he did. That is enough. After that, nobody can help despising Arnold. I have always wanted to despise him, but I never knew how until I read Max Beerbohm's quasi-defense of him.

This brings me to another point, which has a kind of moral to it. It is the difference between the British and the American treatment. If you have read Mencken, you will notice that he depends for his effects upon a kind of literary blackguardism. He invents words when he can, to show his contempt for the American "yokelry," but he rarely presents the evidence. The British critic almost invariably does. He says, in effect, that so-and-so may be a good writer, but on the other hand, here is what so-and-so writes. He then quotes from so-and-so. When Amy Lowell published her book on Keats, the American critics (perhaps there was press-agent pressure brought to bear upon them) praised the book as a work of scholarship. But when it reached England the British critics declared, in effect, "She does not know how to write." They thereupon proceeded to quote from what she had written. You could see for yourself.

This method has its advantages, and also it appears to be a much more honest method. But that is not always so. Bad writing is not alone a true criterion of a writer's real place. Theodore Dreiser is undoubtedly our worst writer, and the British critics are fond of quoting from him to prove this. He is also undoubtedly our dullest writer, but he is worth while because he has the gift of shamelessness. He does not conceal even his incidental virtues. We know what he is from what he writes. This may not make him great, but it makes him as great as he can be with all of the other drawbacks. In an age of sleek affectation, where 99 percent of written literature is the cheapest kind of a trade, if a man cares for what he writes to the extent of refusing to write for money, that is a great gain. Dreiser apparently did this for years. What he writes after this is of no consequence, except as a kind of reporting. What he did write is important in the measure of what I have indicated.

To produce the evidence against an author, that is, to quote from what he writes, may not always be fair, therefore, for all great writers are sometimes bad writers. Then again, it depends upon what you quote. It is said that the English reviews of Amy Lowell's book on Keats broke her heart and hastened her death. I do not believe it. She was too mature a person to care for adverse criticism, painful as it might seem.

It is a great pity, for the need is great, but we have no critic in this country of sufficient weight and courage and judgment to command our attention. We have a great number of facile writers, but the moment anyone rises to the place where he commands a view, he shows his incapacity. An instance is that of Sinclair Lewis. He achieved an audience by sheer talent. His Babbitt, his Main Street, were real symbols. But the profits went to his head and in Elmer Gantry he lost it. It is not, of necessity, that you have to be fair. But you have to be unruffled. You can be as angry as you like, as prejudiced as you like, but you must control yourself. And you must believe in your own truth. Mencken got out of Tennessee when they began to mutter. He could not afford to take chances with the new edition of his paper coming along. It is also one thing to be arrested in Boston by prearrangement, and another to be silent when you are asked "What is truth?"

The Yard on a Night of Mist

These trees are transient in the mist,
Are baseless on the air,
They ride like shadows of grey ships
Lost to the north somewhere.
Nothing in anchored stillness lies:
Without, within, the homeless spars
Of lost ships drifting in no wind
Beneath the stuff of stars.

MARSHALL SCHACHT.

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GERMANY'S CENTRE PARTY

By ROBERT SENCOURT

The Centre party, to which the majority of German Catholics belong, has taken a prominent part in the conduct of the Reich government. Inevitably, however, the disintegrating forces of the post-war era have had their effect upon this organization. There has been much talk of change and even of strife. We have asked Mr. Sencourt, a veteran student of European affairs, to analyze recent developments and to point out leading personalities. His paper has been brought as nearly up to date as is possible, but nothing of prophecy is either intended or implied.—The Editors.

THE Centre party of Germany was founded in 1870 to defend Catholic interests. Its leaders were Windhorst and, later, Von Hertling. The revolution of 1918 brought it into prominence, because the Lutheran prestige was lessened in the Reich by the departure of the kaiser, and because it held the balance of power. Essentially a middle party, with firm Catholic principles, it has as a whole advocated recognition of the Weimar constitution, fulfilment of the treaty of Versailles with the object of conciliating Germany's former enemies, a policy of compromise and moderation to adjust conflicting interests in the Reich; and naturally it supports denominational education and closer relations with the Vatican.

Herr Erzberger was its first big man after the revolution, and since it is now possible to have a Catholic Chancelor for the Reich, Marx was in that office from 1923 to 1925, as Fehrenbach had been in 1920 and 1921 and Wirth in the two preceding years. But its coöperation with the Right, that is to say the extreme conservatives, or National party, in the Luther Cabinet naturally annoyed its working-men supporters, so that Dr. Wirth was forced to resign in the September of 1925. But when the party congress met at Kassel in the following November, the party reaffirmed its loyalty to the republic. This cut it off from the conservative element, and Dr. Wirth again became its head in July, 1926.

It obtained sixty-eight seats in the Reichstag at the last elections and represents something over four million votes. Its members include twelve labor leaders, eleven landowners, eleven government officials, ten industrialists, five clerics, four teachers, three clerks and three laborers, two lawyers, one journalist, one party employee, and one married woman. Bavaria used to be the party's stronghold, but Bavaria's Catholics are now in the Bavarian People's party. The Centre finds its support in Baden, Wurttemberg, the Rhineland and the Ruhr, which touches on Westphalia, and in Silesia. As far back as 1909 Erzberger observed that "it had come to stay and every statesman must be prepared to reckon with it." The revolution has proved this true. There have been over twenty governments in power in Germany since 1919, and the Centre has been represented in them all.

Not bound to the soil like the Nationalist party, nor to industry like the People's party, nor to labor like the Social Democrats, it is free to work for all these and more. It is united in foreign politics, and is consistent in support of Stresemann. When Locarno was debated on November 14, 1925, Fehrenbach stated precisely the stand of the party in this regard; and the tenor of the following remarks may be said to represent the party.

> The fundamental law of our political proceedings following on the unhappy ending of the world war is the reconstruction of our German Reich from a state of bondage to one of freedom, from need and misery to economic health. We are conscious that this high goal can be reached only step by step over the road of peaceful understanding with other nations, and that this road can be successfully traveled by a people defeated in war and robbed of all power, only by firm self-restraint and severe sacrifices.

They therefore accepted, as he went on to point out, the London agreement, the Dawes plan, Locarno and the German entry into the League of Nations.

But with regard to internal politics, they have naturally different programs for the different classes. The landholders of Silesia, with their tradition, are in every way different from the miners in the Ruhr. In Baden, Wurttemberg and Westphalia and the Rhineland, most of the members are poor or middle-class farmers. They seek state help through land banks to finance easy credits, through tariff protection, low taxation and a carefully worked-out policy of getting more people on to land yet uncultivated.

The most important element from the point of view of interest and numbers is the labor movement now headed by Dr. Adam Stegerwald. This Christian union first met in Mainz as a consequence of two understandings between Pope Leo XIII and the late kaiser, which had given its movement a stronger momentum throughout the Reich. In the great encyclical, Rerum Novarum, the Pope had urged that Catholic workers should form an association to help each individual member "to better his condition to the uttermost in mind, body and property." Rerum Novarum is supplemented by the encyclical Graves de Communi. For the Christian philosopher popular government was right only in so far as people were right-minded. Government

> ought to have as its foundation the principle laid down by divine faith, having regard indeed to the temporal advantage of the lower orders, but designing therewith to fit their minds for the enjoyment of things eternal.

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What were the seeds that flourished in this Thomist soil? The supreme sacredness of law and justice; the inviolate right of having and holding; the divinity of laws which belong to a well-ordered state, which had a form and character imposed on it by the supreme Governor.

With these principles clear before it, this Christian federation of labor unions, the Deutscher Gewerrschaftsbund, which comprises among others four subsidiary Christian trade unions—those of miners, factory and transport workers, metal workers and agricultural workers—has a membership of 700,000—more than a sixth of the Centre party. Dr. Stegerwald began life in 1874, and first earned his living as a carpenter. He rose to eminence after the war, and in 1921 was Prime Minister of Prussia. The great union he heads is not exclusively Catholic. It aims at applying existing laws, and at making new laws, in the workers' interest: it encourages the workers to build up insurance societies among themselves, and to defend the rights and freedom of workers in contracts and agreements. It is not a question of names, or even of parliamentary tactics. This great organization aims to war against all reactionary movements, and to imbue public life and the life of the state with a true Christian spirit, in which the forces of the Christian workers' movement must play a decisive rôle.

Although the Centre party showed a united front at the May elections of last year, there had already been a good deal of discussion between its divergent interests. The labor unions, feeling that they were not receiving enough attention, and resenting even more the close coöperation of the Centre party as a whole with the conservatives and national parties, were inclined to bear toward the Social Democrats. The situation has become acute during the last few months, and efforts to hold the party together have been intensified. Speaking in Erfurt on October 19, Herr Marx urged that not only was it the most promising tactic for the future, but it was an actual fact of "Catholic Action." To a certain extent this speech echoed a declaration made in Forchheim by the leader of the Bavarian People's party. Monsignor Leicht had announced that his party was ready to enter into a general coalition with the Centre to formulate a general progressive program. The suggestion was well received by the press of the Centre party, the chief organ, Germania, commenting on it with particular pleasure. The idea was also applauded in the Rhineland, as witness the language of the Kölnische Volkszeitung:

> The movement for reform has begun. It is not enough merely to mark time in our old positions. We must take new steps to ensure the means of livelihood for our people in the present and in the future. On the foundation of a strong local self-government, a vital democratic realization has been working out both in the west of Germany and in other parts of it.

But the movement for a great Catholic coalition was weakened by the understanding between the Christian trade unions and the Social Democratic or general labor party, which took place at the same time. This party naturally looked toward its own end, and took a strong stand on the question of the Panzerschiff. When the Centre party met in their annual congress at Cologne, December 8, these cross-currents of course became manifest. The younger members claimed the right to choose leaders and a debate was opened on the matter. At the same time a sharp divergence between classes made itself felt. The representatives of government employees were on one side; on the other the representatives of labor complained that it was too evident that their influence on their party was insignificant.

Dr. Stegerwald took up the question of synthesis. Beginning with a declaration of his faith in the republic, he proceeded to a consideration of the coalition. He reminded them that any Cabinet without Centrist representatives was absurd, for it was essential that when nine-tenths of the question in debate must be decided by their vote, their representatives must be in a Cabinet to give advice as to how these questions were being prepared, and how they would be put. In the meantime the Centre party, he said, would have to face the facts that it was neither large enough to form a Cabinet alone, and that no one else could form a Cabinet without it. But a Cabinet of the Centre was a definite thing in itself standing for principles of its own. He believed in the necessity of the Panzercruiser. He insisted that Germany's place in the League of Nations, following on Locarno, was incompatible with the presence of foreign troops in her territories. He believed in a closer affiliation with Austria. As for home politics, he believed that they must move away from the atmosphere created by Bismarck. He believed therefore in reforming the Weimar constitution so as to make the Reich into a living organic unit. To achieve this he aimed at a sound political education of the people as a whole: he thought that the representatives should be in closer touch with the electors, and after declaring his resolution to work at getting better conditions for the working-man, he urged his party to join with the Catholics in Bavaria to present a united front.

Monsignor Kaas closed the session. He repeated the greeting to the Bavarian Catholic party; spoke of the reasons why the reparation question must be treated with sincerity by France; and laid special emphasis on the necessity for an economic policy so that those in need might look forward to a better future.

But in spite of these admirable generalities, the young members of the congress, especially on the trade union side, remained restless. Early in January it was suggested that Stegerwald should stand aside and allow the Christian trade unions to develop as an entirely independent workers' movement. Whether

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the Church could keep control over them in purely Catholic questions, or whether this workers' movement, joining the Lutheran and others, might become entirely independent of Church control, no one could tell. Monsignor Kaas took no open cognizance of the tendency to form a separate party, but later in January it was felt that the crisis had become so acute that the only way to hold the Centre party together was to put Dr. Stegerwald at the head of it. His speech at Cologne had showed his moderation. At the same time he was a working-man and a representative of working-men. The Centre party contained elements which looked on the new choice as revolutionary. But no other man could inspire the confidence of a sufficient majority. At his election, Stegerwald declared that he would resign his presidency of the trades union, for his task was now that of head of a bigger political party. His sympathies would rest with his old friends, but he could no longer be officially identified with their union as representative.

For the moment it seems as though any actual crisis is over. The latest advices from Germany report laments from the extreme Left that they have not been able to win over the Christian trades unions to their "progressive" program of divorce; the extreme severity of conditions and the amount of unemployment weigh hard upon the people, and naturally the radical labor elements feel that if something desperate were done, they might be relieved. But they are in a minority, and so have to hold their hands. Indeed the more extreme the "people's party" and the Social Democrats become, the more they resent the reserve of the Catholic parties.

But the position involves in no way a fundamental crisis. At the most, as we say, the Catholic trades unions make hardly more than a sixth of the Centre party, which would therefore be formidable enough to function without them. Moreover, the extreme ability and moderation of Stegerwald hold the party together. It is curious how little about this remarkable man is known outside of Germany. He is not only the head of the Centre party; he is a safeguard of general stability in Germany, and typical of an ideal now common in the whole republic.

THE ACTIVITY OF IDLENESS

By PAUL BROWN

EVER since I reached that shadowy and mythical place in my life when people began referring to me and thinking of me as a man rather than as a boy, I have gone for fish. Always before that I had gone fishing.

There is an enormous difference. An adult who goes for fish is constrained to return with fish, or his reputation as an angler will suffer. He is likely to be subjected to gentle, derisive comments from his friends, and facetious interrogation which it is impossible to answer without increasing the amusement which prompted the gentle irony. But a boy can go fishing and return with fish or without fish. It makes little difference to his associates, and even less to the boy.

I had a stream to fish in when I was a boy, and nearly all the fishing I ever did was done in that stream. It was alternately a meandering brook through a meadow fragrant with timothy and mint, a deep stream which had been dammed to provide the power to turn the creaking wheel of an ancient flour mill, and a rapid and rippling creek where the water gurgled and chuckled over the pebbles as it carressed the sleek sides of red fins and chub. I learned to expect comfortable little streams hung with willows and beeches where the birds would dart about and scold me for daring to invade their privacy; still waters which would reflect better than the best mirror that ever was made the overhanging elder, laden with its sweet-smelling blossoms or luscious fruit; pools where the edges were filled with the gnarled roots of walnuts and the delicate tracery made by the waving, weblike rootlets of the locust, where sunnies and perch and maybe bass would lie. Then I could fish.

Other waters I could understand, after a fashion. I understood them well enough to take fish from them. I knew, in a general way, the peculiarities of them. My reason and my intelligence told me much about them, but when I had tramped along them all day, perhaps, or waded them, or drifted over them in a boat, and finally quit them with a string of fish, I never felt that I had been fishing. I had merely been after fish. It was always most pleasurable, but somehow not entirely satisfying.

When I first began to go fishing I was taken by my grandfather, the finest old man I have ever known. That charming intimacy and understanding which is often observable between an old man and a child was highly developed with us, although I doubt if either of us knew it or would have thought much about it if we had. It was just that we both liked to go fishing. Since the time when my grandfather and I went fishing I have gone for fish in many places all over the world—my knowledge of how to go for fish and what kind of tackle to use has been increased enormously. But I have always been quite sure that if I could have been given my choice of all possible places of the earth to start my fishing, I would have selected the Manatawny, and chosen my grandfather of all people to teach me the gentlest of the outdoor arts.

I have moved away from the Manatawny now, but

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not too far away. I can still return, and I do, often—especially when I get tired of going for fish and want to go fishing. When a man goes for fish he goes with the man he has become, but when he goes fishing he goes with the boy that he was; and I want to be able to sit comfortably and have a delightful and understanding chat with the youngster who is so much finer than I am. I like to feel that he is close by and watching intently with me as my gaily colored float gradually drifts down toward the overhanging trunk of a great beech, to tip up and slowly disappear under the surface as a sunnie or rock bass swims leisurely away with the hook and worm to his retreat under the roots of the tree. Many times the boy will grin understandingly at the man when I intentionally fail to strike and permit the fish to nibble the worm from the hook, until the float returns to the surface and resumes the quietness and freedom from motion which tells only too plainly what has happened.

The boy can understand, too, why the man continues to expect so much from the shadow of a big rock or a cluster of spatter dock, when effort after effort has failed to justify that expectation. The boy is a true fisherman, and like all anglers worthy of the name, is more a philosopher and dreamer than a taker of fish. Dreams are magnificent things, and what difference does it make if the big fish of dreams turn out to be the minnows of fact when they are finally caught? For a long time they were splendid. Anyhow, the fish are still biting, and even if they are not caught it will probably be better. They are always fine fish, big fish, colorful and splendid—those which bite and get away!

There is one dam along the Manatawny which is the best place in the world to go fishing. Below the dam breast the waters have dug out a long, deep hole with their continual rush and tumult, but immediately the creek becomes shallow and hurries happily over the gravel and stones between long rows of elderberries and birches. I can never forget the luscious pungency of the birch bark I used to chew as a child. It was far more pleasant, with a much keener flavor, than the birch bark I casually gnaw from the branches now. The elderberries are never so sweet or so deliciously juicy as they were, stripped from the clusters in great mouthfuls with a fine disregard of stems and tiny insects. But the water is difficult. Fishing there is impossible—it becomes angling.

Above the breast, however, the waters have been backed into a long, broad surface which is often ten feet or more from the bottom. In the winter, when the dam is covered with ice, the farmer and miller gets his crop from the creek rather than from the farm. The fruits of his soil have been gathered, but the fruit of the stream cannot be obtained until after there has been a long cold spell which freezes the water eighteen inches thick or so. Then the ice is cut and stored in an old ice-house which looks for all the world like a disreputable doll, for there is sawdust trickling and running from every burst seam of the building. In the summer-time it is always cool there, for the shade of a great elm and the dampness of the melting ice combine to make it so. It is an ideal place to fish, for I can sit there under the elm tree and look up the dam with its perfect reflection of majestic trees and fleecy clouds, over the meadow dotted with the black and white of peacefully ruminating cows, over the bright, fresh green of the waving wheat-fields, up to the dark-timbered slopes of the hills which sweep on and on to the horizon.

I can hear the snipe chattering along the banks just around the curve, even above the constant sound of the water tumbling over the dam breast and the occasional shrill creaking of the old mill-wheel complaining at its laborious turning, for these subdued noises blend so perfectly with the tranquillity of silence that they become a part of it. They do not prevent me from hearing the shrill chattering of an angry squirrel as he flirts his tail about saucily and scrambles among the frailest of branches with the utmost indifference to my profound conviction that he will surely fall. I can still detect the slight swish as a great bass passes close to the surface and leaves a swirl of rings on the water which will continue until they cease at my very feet, rocking the little water-bugs mightily as they roll ashore.

Fish, as such, seem almost an intrusion at such times. I am so busy that I often have a distinct feeling of annoyance when I become aware that something is investigating my bait. Yet will I never get over the galvanic thrill which comes when my float goes under with a rush—the promise of a big fish, and not the little sunnie or rockie I thought was disturbing it? I hope not.

There is one big bass, a bass I have seen so often that I regard him as an intimate friend, which lurks in the deep water right in front of the ice-house. I have nearly caught him twice when I was trying to catch fish, and I have actually caught him once when I was fishing. I had been watching the antics of a family of muskrats which was, for some reason I never learned, considerably exercised. The balminess of the delightful afternoon and the lengthening shadows as the sun continued its stately march across the heavens had combined to lull me into complete repose, so that even the tribulations of the muskrats seemed unimportant. Almost casually I let my eyes sweep the surface of the dam, and I became aware that my float was quivering slightly—so slightly that the motion might well have been caused by the brilliant dragon-fly which had alighted upon it. It seemed to be so frail, so brittle, as it paused for a moment to permit me to enjoy its stream-lined iridescence.

Suddenly the float shot under the surface like a streak of colored light, carrying the dragon-fly with it for an instant. My amused delight at the discomfiture and destroyed dignity of the snake-feeder of my childhood almost caused me to ignore the enormous strike

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which caused it; but I grasped my rod with a sense of tolerant resignation, feeling entirely compensated if the fish were gone. But he was not. Even as I picked up my rod he started a rush which told me immediately that here was a fish! My reel began to sing as the line ran out rapidly—and fish which can carry line off a reel are scarce in the Manatawny. I struck, and at once I knew that I had caught the big fellow! It took me all of five minutes, five of the longest minutes I have ever had, to bring that bass to shore. I lifted him out carefully with my fingers in his gills, and after I had admired him for a moment, permitted him to free himself and flop frantically back into the cool water.

The man that I am caught the fish, but the boy that I was let him go. I think I like the boy best.

OLD DAYS IN NORTHAMPTON

By E. J. BREEN

WHILE the glamour attendant upon the efforts of a former President of the United States to enter upon the duties of a private citizen still lingers around Northampton, Massachusetts, there is an old story about that city and the influence that one courageous man has had on its destiny, that is well worth the telling.

On an evening in late May, 1806, a lone horseman and his tired horse entered Northampton. The stranger dismounted at the town pump, unloosed the saddle-girth and allowed his horse a good drink. Then having satisfied his own thirst, he led the animal to a hitching-post and inquired of a passerby the location of the jail. The native directed the inquirer and made haste, in small-town fashion, to spread the news of his destination. The jail at that particular time was easily the most important topic in local gossip, as two men were imprisoned there who were to be executed within a week on a conviction of murder.

The stranger introduced himself to the warden as a Catholic priest from Boston. He had come to administer spiritual consolation to the sentenced men who had written him requesting his priestly services. He identified himself as the Reverend Jean-Louis Lefebvre de Cheverus, and although night was already beginning to close in, asked for the privilege of seeing the two men. This was refused. He then sought shelter for his beast and himself. The inn would not have him. Leading his horse along the streets, he requested lodging from door to door, but met with the same denial of his request. The knowledge that he was a Catholic priest, that he was there to give spiritual consolation to the condemned men, and that he was a Frenchman, went before him, and no respectable Northampton people wanted anything to do with "such a monster."

There were no Catholic priests in that portion of Massachusetts at that time, and there is no record of Catholic activities there at any time during the 150 years that the settlement had been in existence. The natives of Northampton (where, of course, the situation is as totally different today as it is throughout the rest of the state) inherited from their forbears a hatred of anything Catholic. The fact that the two men found guilty of murder were Catholics aggravated this intolerance, and Father de Cheverus was doubly undesirable because of the colony's traditional hatreds from the early days of the French and Indian Wars.

When the priest was about to give up all hope of finding a lodging, the poorest family in the town saw necessities for themselves in the dollars he offered and took him in. In the morning the man of the house reported that the priest had been for several hours on his knees. As soon as possible the latter obtained permission to visit the prisoners. He spent every daylight hour with them until June 5, the date set for their execution when, according to The History of Northampton, from the pen of James Russell Trumbull, "the largest crowd ever gathered here up to that time assembled, it being estimated that 15,000 people were present."

Mr. Trumbull was the most prominent newspaperman of his day in Hampshire County, of which Northampton is the capital. He spent the years from 1853 to 1877 as editor of the Hampshire Gazette, a newspaper which was born in 1786 and is a vigorous and important daily today. I acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Trumbull's book for the passages quoted in this story. They were evidently culled originally from the files of the Hampshire Gazette.

The two unfortunate men who were to die that June day said they were "only solicitous about our salvation," and made a plea to Father de Cheverus that they should not be reduced "to the necessity of listening just before we die to the voice of one who is not a Catholic." It was the custom in Massachusetts and other New England states in those days to have a sermon preached before an execution. A local preacher was prepared to take over this part of the ceremony, but the priest protested that "the wishes of the dying are always sacred. They have desired to have no one but myself, and I alone will speak to them."

He evidently rose to great heights on this occasion, when a lesser man would have succumbed to his surroundings. No doubt he felt a holy indignation against the curiosity which had attracted to the mournful scene such a crowd of spectators, many of them women. In any case he won his plea, and the sermon was his.

"Orators," he said in a loud and stern voice, "are usually flattered by having a numerous audience, but I am ashamed of the one before me. . . . Are there then men to whom the death of their fellow-beings is a spectacle of pleasure, an object of curiosity? . . . But you especially, O women! what has induced you to come to this place? Is it to wipe away the cold damps of death that trickle down the faces of these unfortunate men? Is it to experience the painful emotions which this scene ought to inspire in every feeling heart? No, it is not for this. Is it then to behold their anguish, and look upon it with tearless, eager and longing eyes? Oh! I blush for you—your eyes are full of murder. . . . You boast of possessing sensibility, and you say it is the highest virtue of women, but if the sufferings of others afford you pleasure, and the death of men is an inviting entertainment for your curiosity, I cannot believe in your idea of virtue. You forget your sex. You are a dishonor and reproach to it."

Not a woman appeared at the executions which followed immediately, "all having retired ashamed of themselves, and blushing for the inhuman curiosity that had brought them there." The coolness of the condemned men in the face of death made a marked impression on those who attended the scene, and some of them, recognizing in the stalwart but humble priest a potency of rare character, suggested to him that he should be able to inform them as to the innocence or guilt of the men because of his dealings with them in the confessional.

He answered this remark some days later by delivering a

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sermon in a public square in which he outlined the doctrine of the Church respecting confession and the inviolable secrecy imposed upon the confessor. At the suggestion of leading citizens he made several other discourses on Catholic rules and doctrines, until the Catholic "monster" of Northampton tradition was shamed out of existence in the minds of intelligent citizens, and the priest was invited to take up his quarters in homes where, before his life and religion became apparent, Satan himself would have been equally welcome.

Northampton had learned to love him within the space of a few weeks, and requested him to remain with them. "He found almost as much difficulty in parting from them as he had in procuring shelter on his arrival." But he had other work to do. His Boston congregation was in sore need of his services.

This holy man was born in Mayenne, France, on January 28, 1768, and was ordained before he reached his twenty-third year. As a priest he refused to take the Revolutionary oath, and with his life in jeopardy, succeeded in reaching England. He went to Boston in 1796, and wrote to Bishop John Carroll at Baltimore asking him to send him where he was most needed "without troubling yourself about means for my support, as I can earn my living by manual labor, if necessary." In 1808, two years after the Northampton episode, he was made the first Bishop of Boston. While he occupied this see he showed his willingness to work by the eagerness with which he traveled over immensely diversified territory. He served Boston as Bishop until 1822, when his health broke down and a trip to his native France was urged upon him. He never returned to America, having been transferred by the Pope to the see of Montauban. He ended his labors July 19, 1836, as the Cardinal Archbishop of Bordeaux.

Legende

And when one day he asked to see her soul,
The lady bound his eyes with her bright hair
To lead him blindfold up the devious stair
Into that vaulted room.

Where old-world windows dripped their jewels in space
Between the airy arches of grey clouds,
Were virgin saints thus decked in luminous shrouds
Suspended in high gloom.

Black tapers that, like fingers of a maid,
Grotesquely shadowed and grotesquely shaped,
Sprang from five silver bases, roundly gaped
Alternate dark and flame.

Blue twilights burned in bowls of Venice glass,
Of gnarled crystal was the pointed door,
And written on the rainbow of the floor
In daytime stars, her name.

The knight knelt low to kiss her fair robe's hem.
He said: "My love, it is a perfect place
And with the single flower of your face
Cathedral most complete."

And so took leave and fell upon that stair
Which he had once ascended, beauty-led,
Where now he found his place among the dead
All likewise indiscreet.

IMELDA MORAN LOGAN.

COMMUNICATIONS

(Owing to the controversial character of one or the other among the letters which follow, it is probably well to assert once again that The Commonweal does not identify itself with any views expressed in this section.—The Editors.)

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND RELIGION

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I was much impressed by Dr. Herzfeld's illuminating discussion on the dearth of Catholic scientists, and followed him in all he said, up to his analysis of what he believes to be the real difficulty. There I hesitated, wondering if the undoubted deficiency in training method he points out is not too simple an explanation. Moreover, I am not aware that the training given in the public grade and high schools is much better, in this respect, than that given in the Catholic school system.

Is the situation very different in Europe? If there are many more Catholics among research workers there, in proportion to their number in the population, than in this country, and European methods of training are so superior to American methods as Dr. Herzfeld implies, then his diagnosis and remedy may be correct. But I wonder if the condition he so justly appraises and rightly deplores may not be due to deeper reasons—to reasons bound up with world developments and their relations to Catholicism in the past century or more. Specifically, does not the situation coincide with the development of the industrial age, our machine civilization, and all that this implies? Has not the fact that modern science is, on the whole, materialistically oriented something to do with the numerical predominance of non-Catholic scientific workers?

I suspect that Catholic training is a factor in the situation and that there is a resultant psychological conflict, but not in the sense Dr. Herzfeld suggests. I see philosophic and emotional factors at work that may account, in part at least, for the difficulty. Does not Catholic training, with its emphasis on eternal values, decidedly color the average Catholic's attitude toward the scientific world and significantly influence his status in that world under present conditions? Does not the Catholic's preoccupation with the things that affect his soul's interests militate against his larger identification with scientific progress and the material outlook that has so greatly motivated and accelerated it?

It is pointed out that in previous centuries there were more scientists among Catholics in proportion to their numbers in the population than there are now. But they were living in the ages of faith, and in a world that was not as materialistic as the present one! Perhaps the tide will turn and we may in another century see a movement away from materialism, industrialism and mechanism, and toward "the things that count."

There are signs already of disillusionment as to the potentialities for human happiness of the materialistic philosophy so intimately associated with the scientific age, and science itself is contributing to it by startling revelations as to its own limitations. Perhaps we can hasten the desired change by "going into science with both feet," as it were, and doing everything possible, as Dr. Herzfeld suggests, to train and develop scientific workers among Catholics. After all, Catholic influence within the ranks is far more potent than Catholic criticism from without. Perhaps with a new orientation to the whole subject of science, based on a restatement of the Church's attitude toward it, we may better achieve our ends.

Incidentally, we need a good deal more original thinking

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on the alleged conflict between science and religion and a far greater contribution of Catholic scientific thought on the subject than we have had. There is too great a tendency to set forth the Catholic position by reference to the work of Catholic scientists of previous generations, and too little coming to grips with the issues that animate the polemics of science and religion in our own day.

PAUL O. KOMORA,
Educational Assistant,
The National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

Denver, Colo.

TO the Editor:—Dr. Herzfeld's article, Scientic Research and Religion, in The Commonweal of March 20, is an astute and tactful approach to the question of why Catholics are not prominent in research study. Though Dr. Herzfeld limits his observations to the field of physical science, his conclusions are tenable as well in more general branches of graduate study, at least among lay students. In this letter I offer only a few sketchy comments on the condition.

1. The Church in America is composed largely of "later" immigrant stock. These immigrants came to make their fortunes, and the way was hard because the positions of power and influence had mostly been gained already by earlier immigrants. These first settlers had even begun to be educated. The Catholic immigrant was on the whole ignorant of—sometimes even antipathetic to—the Anglo-Saxon heritage which the earlier Americans had naturally accepted as the pillar of the new American culture. He was discriminated against socially, sometimes economically. His salvation was financial success. Astounding numbers of Catholic families have struggled very hard and long to gain admittance to the imaginary paradise of "successful Americans." Pure learning had no place in such a scheme of life. Learning was of no use unless it brought "results"—i. e., financial or political recognition. Hard work was better than any fancy book-stuff in any case—as our fathers and grandfathers said, work (by which they meant lucrative endeavor of any kind) alone "got you there." Intellectual curiosity—thinking—in the abstract was taboo because it was lazy and non-utilitarian. But "a good head for business"—ah, that was a gift from heaven, indeed! So arose the tradition that Catholic young men should seek their livelihood in the marts. To such careers graduate study is now considered non-essential; just as a college education itself was until a few years ago. Even nowadays Catholics are sent to college more as a gesture toward conformity with prevailing social snobbery than with any idea that the education will much improve the life of business for which the young man is destined.

2. A conception of the world that is confined to its pragmatic possibilities is common to Americans but especially typical of Catholics. This fact has no connection with their Church as such, but arises from their pioneering desire to "rise in the world," and achieve a place beside Americans of older stock and more complacent position. Pure scholarship, which is in essence opposed to a utilitarian philosophy, has little appeal to such.

3. A far greater percentage of the promising intellects of the Catholic Church enters the religious life than is the case in the Protestant denominations. It must also be remembered that whereas the Catholic fifth of the population gives up a large number of its choicest men to the priesthood, and centers a vast proportion of its educational effort on those men, the non-Catholic four-fifths is so largely divorced from churches as organizations that it asks comparatively few of its brilliant minds to enter the ministry. Therefore, outside the Church a larger proportion of keen minds can be spared to intellectualism.

4. It is often maintained in theory that the combination of religious instruction with secular learning in a school does not in any way stifle intellectual growth. The proponents of religious education—of which I, in my humble sphere, am one—have a sufficiently strong case without resorting to such a pious fiction. Let the fact be faced that a school which devotes a large part of its energy to character-discipline and religious exhortation obviously does not produce the intellectual results with its students that a school does which devotes its whole energy to purely secular education. It should not be expected to do that. At any rate we should not delude ourselves with the smug belief that leading Catholic universities and leading non-religious universities foster to the same degree intellectual curiosity in the students and disinterested scholarship in the professors.

5. The professors in Catholic universities are often priests more interested in pious living than in learning. Such men give themselves to the priesthood for the greater honor and glory of God. If teachers are needed they will teach, regardless of their liking for the work, and regardless of their fitness for teaching the particular subjects assigned them. The willingness of a round peg to submit itself to a square hole is doubtless a commendable virtue. The ultimate value of such a distortion, however, seems questionable if one considers what far-reaching effects haphazard and shoddy teaching may have on the young minds under instruction. A lack of scholarship in any considerable number of the teaching staff of an institution will invariably result in a lack of scholarship in the products of that institution. That may sound banal—but it is a fact sometimes ignored by very worthy Catholic educators.

6. Lay teachers in Catholic schools are not well paid, and are often made to feel that they would not be much missed. Their morale is usually low. Intellectual individualism is not encouraged among them. Seldom may they hope to have any considerable official part in the management of the school—an incentive that is open to teachers in lay colleges. The matter of degrees—which are proper signs of hard labor in the vineyards of learning—is so little considered in employing instructors that the men thus employed do not harbor the high regard for pure scholarship which they, of all men, should be encouraged in.

7. Because of a combination of factors already mentioned, the heads of curriculum in Catholic universities have not kept pace with secular schools in the founding and thorough equipping of graduate schools. Such students as do graduate work are tempted therefore to do it in a secular school.

HARRY MCGUIRE.

FOR AGGRESSIVE DEFENSE

Atlantic City, N. J.

TO the Editor:—The editorial in The Commonweal of April 10, 1929, entitled Mr. Stimson's First Job, briefly summarizing the failure of the Calvert Associates in regard to the Mexican question, is worthy of consideration. In my opinion the greatest defender of the Church in the United States is your society, which at all times seems to lead other organizations in attacking bigotry and intolerance. The brunt of the battle against religious hatred appears always to be borne by The Commonweal.

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To point out that the Mexican situation has not improved since 1926 is to state that for the next eight years, so far as the United States is concerned, persecution will continue in that state. As Herbert Hoover silently sanctioned and encouraged verbal persecution of the Church from June until November of 1928, so he will now silently encourage and sanction a bloody persecution of the same Church while he is President. Again, the matter deserves serious consideration. Might not such a persecution break out in this country? Intolerance had reached a high pitch when the Civil War wiped out the Know-nothing party. Intolerance seems at such frenzy today. Though everything appears peaceful and serene on the surface, what real assurance have we that one or two years hence the Roman Catholic Church will be enjoying such liberty here?

The only way that the Catholic Church can keep peace in the Americas is by unity among its members. Catholics outnumber the Protestant religions combined, having 60 percent to their 40 percent in population. Why can the 40 percent stir up revolt in Mexico and demoralize all of the Catholic republics north of the equator? Because that 40 percent is organized and the 60 percent is not. And further because the 40 percent has used 20,000,000 Catholics to help enforce their pernicious tyranny. It is time that the Roman Catholics of this country ask themselves, before shouting with the mob, "Is this an indirect move to undermine the Catholic Church?"

It seems that the time has come for the active propagation of unity among the Catholics of the Americas. I believe that the Catholics should band together under capable leaders in an organization extending from Alaska to Argentina. Such an organization would wield a powerful influence against anti-clerical politics. It would be solely for defense, and by its own rules forbid any active propagation of the Church. It would be for no particular state and above every state, but always subject to the Church laws. Since no nation seems willing to step into Mexico in behalf of the Catholics being persecuted, it is time that their coreligionists resorted to force. Let the organization by its dominating force first attempt all conciliatory means, and they failing, go in and clean up Calles, Gil and Company, whether the United States likes it or not. What is an arms embargo act when people are being murdered? The actions, however, could not step beyond aggressive defense.

Some effects of the above plan were seen in this city about 1923 or 1924. The Ku Klux Klan had become very active and a wave of religious bigotry was sweeping over Atlantic City. The mayor at that time was a Roman Catholic. The Ku Klux Klan applied for a permit to parade. They were promised the permit provided they paraded without hoods. That was not satisfactory. Immediately an unknown character calling himself Colonel A. began to appear in the various Protestant churches defying the city government and declaring that the Klan would parade without the permit. Several threatening letters were sent to the mayor by unknown people, and religious feeling was becoming very bitter. Colonel A. became more defiant in his attacks.

One Sunday morning it was announced at all Masses on the Island that a meeting "of great moment" would be held in one of the parish school-houses that night. The auditorium of the school was jammed. There were several speeches. Then the mayor announced his plans. Cards were distributed on which everyone signed his name and address pledging to give his services to the city in the event of trouble. If the Ku Klux Klan formed to parade, the siren on a local dairy would blow, as well as the fire horns, and a certain code would flash on all of the street traffic lights. Every Catholic was to rush immediately to the city hall, where they would be organized for attack.

The Ku Klux Klan never made any more threats to parade. Four weeks later Colonel A. dropped dead (though not necessarily from fright). The answer to Colonel A. was made melodramatic by design and would have done credit to Cecil De Mille or David Belasco. A threat of force ofttimes eliminates the necessity of its use. The Ku Klux Klan in Atlantic City was a joke until the recent campaign. Such unity among the Catholics of the Americas would make the anti-clerics think twice before acting. It is well for us that many of them think a stronger unity exists among us than really does.

The great success of The Commonweal as a medium of truth suggests the fact that the Church must be more actively defended in the daily newspapers. Since the present press refuses to print the truth about Mexico and other Catholic questions, it seems worthy to consider the operation of a secular chain of newspapers to cover the Americas from Alaska to Argentina that would tell the truth. Without being religious papers they should be edited from a Catholic view-point. Such papers are probably found in Catholic Latin America, but I know of none in this part of the country. It would certainly be an expensive proposition to start, but it is a logical one.

WILLIAM M. F. CONNELLY.

WHO SHALL OBEY THE LAW?

Lowell, Mass.

TO the Editor:—Dr. John A. Ryan's enlightening exposé of the morals of the Eighteenth Amendment in The Commonweal for April 3 should be broadcast in every town and hamlet in the land. The reverend and learned economist speaks to the point, and his conclusions will dispel much unrest among over-conscientious Americans (some of them distinctly gullible) who can now rest assured that a competent authority has spoken.

I like Dr. Ryan's conclusion. Here it is: ". . . . In a word, the 'honest men and women' who actively oppose prohibition in all lawful ways, can rightfully feel that they are engaged in a great crusade for fundamental liberties, for liberties that are not a whit less sacred and precious than those which were fought for by the men who made the American Revolution."

These men who "made the American Revolution" rebelled against the constitution and ordinances of an English king and Parliament, which then were the laws of the American Colonies. If we follow the specious pleading and ill-founded arguments of the self-righteous dictators and pharisees in this present year of grace, the American patriots who rebelled against and overthrew the English laws in 1775 by force of arms, and by oral, written and implied resistance, were all traitors, malefactors, malcontents and destroyers of the then constitution of English law. And by the same specious argument advanced by the select spokesmen and spokeswomen of the prohibition pharisees, the only moral citizens were the Tories, and the British soldiers and agents in the colonies when the patriots rebelled.

What a force these self-righteous hypocrites are trying to perpetuate in our constitutional law! What puritanical bunk they are laboring so hard to infuse into our festered body politic! Are we to be made the continual subjects of their bureaucratic subterfuge and their autocratic, bigoted dictating! I rather think not!

GEORGE F. DWYER.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The Camel through the Needle's Eye

THE Theatre Guild has the habit, every now and then, of dressing up the veriest tosh in such elaborate togs that you have to prick yourself with a pin between the acts to realize that your boredom is not entirely your own fault. The appearances are all against you. Lee Simonson's settings stare you in the face with all the polite assurance of established art. Philip Moeller's direction sets the pace for an almost perfectly selected cast of actors going through their lines with a perfection of business and interplay worthy of a stage classic. Add to this the atmosphere of a Guild subscription audience, seated in all the consciousness of membership in America's premier producing outfit, and you have, after all, some excuse for your bewilderment in watching such a piece as Frantisek Langer's The Camel through the Needle's Eye.

The play is, relatively speaking, as long as its title, and much less important. The main trouble with it is its artificiality—that kind of deliberate exaggeration and distortion of values which should find an outlet only in farce, and which becomes merely tedious and annoying in alleged comedy. You might imagine, for example, a satirical farce in which the son of a rich man had become so utterly helpless that he had actually lost the power of sustained speech, regaining it only after the experiences of comparative poverty and considerable amorous emotion. But Langer postulates such an idiot in a leisurely comedy, in which many of the characters are developed with measurable care. Alik Vilim, admirably played by Elliot Cabot, has many flesh-and-blood moments which belie the absurdity of his near-dumbness. Throughout two and a half acts, he carries on most of his dialogue by notes and letters which someone else must read aloud to the audience. When he does break into furious speech, you are almost too tired of the exaggerated dumb play to be amused. As a stage character, he is neither fish nor fowl, neither type symbol nor believable person. Only Mr. Cabot's acting saves him from disastrous incredibility.

The same is true, in another sense, of the young girl of the slums whom he eventually takes to wife. Susi, as given the breath of life by Miriam Hopkins, learns the lesson of mannered speech and drawing-room etiquette with astounding rapidity. In the course of three months as Alik's mistress, she becomes a satisfactory hostess for men of the world and of finance, also a most efficient secretary to Alik, and a woman capable of playing the stock market with deadly certainty. Coming from a cellar home, which her mother incenses with warmed-over cabbage to give it the smell of poverty, and which her stepfather supports by feigning epilepsy on the streets, this abrupt rise to social agility and charm and to higher business acumen savors a little too much of the days of Aladdin. Here again, Miss Hopkins, by her ingratiating genuineness, almost brings the magic doll to life.

The rest of the characters are developed in the true comedy vein, and might, if permitted, form a background for two honestly drawn young people puzzled by environment and social distinctions into adopting an irregular, though ultimately permanent, arrangement. But that is apparently not the author's purpose. He seems to be out to amuse you with irregularities for their own sake—by the hackneyed method of suggesting that love is its own excuse for anything you like, and by presenting you with a marriage settlement only to illustrate (it would seem) how utterly unimportant it is, except perhaps as a convenience in the event of approaching motherhood. The detailed embroidery of this theme is unimportant, save that it records once more the utter childishness of modern authors and would-be-sophisticated producers in putting on plays that renounce all responsibility toward the facts of life and what they entail. (At the Martin Beck Theatre.)

Let Us Be Gay

RACHEL CROTHERS has a lot of fun in this latest play of hers with the quite simple theme of what happens to a divorced couple when they are unwittingly thrown into each other's company on a house-party. Naturally, they decide to marry each other again. That is almost a foregone conclusion, granted the particular couple and a prologue which gives you the private background of their divorce. The main interest of the play, as entertainment, lies in the embroidery of plot, slight as it is, and in the creation of one amazingly dominating character in Mrs. Boucicault—a grandmother of seventy-six who is as warm and human as she is cantankerous, and as foolish in the handling of her granddaughter's love affairs as she is wise in her tolerance of humanity at large. The play is helped immeasurably by the superb acting of this part by Charlotte Granville.

Let Us Be Gay can hardly be said to establish a very definite view-point. It is inclined to float in that convenient twilight of emotions which regards morals very largely as a matter of cycles and conventions. But that effect may be Miss Crother's method of trying to establish the sympathy of a modern audience preening itself with sophistication. For, basically, Mrs. Boucicault is ready to move heaven and earth to see that her daughter does not spoil her prospective marriage by indulging in a side infatuation beforehand. To this end the old lady invites Mrs. Brown (Francine Larrimore) to her country house to serve as a counter attraction for the man whom Deirdre, the granddaughter, has fastened upon. That man is also named Brown, and only the audience, thanks to a prologue, knows the true inwardness of the situation thus created.

The Browns separated and divorced when Mrs. Brown discovered that her husband had been momentarily unfaithful. Once her ideal of him was broken, she could not face further life with him, in spite of the fact that they had two children, and in spite of his obviously sincere and continued love for her. Three years of separation and varied experience, however, have brought Mrs. Brown more maturity of judgment. She is a little better able to face realities, and to balance virtues against weaknesses. Her pride is the one obstacle left. Miss Crothers's play is largely the story of how that pride is broken until the Browns are both ready to start anew for their own sakes and the children's. Miss Larrimore plays her part with considerable subtlety and charm and with an undercurrent of true feeling. Warren William as the husband is a trifle too wooden to carry conviction. But in Miss Granville's work and in the part written for her lies the unique entertainment of the evening. (At the Little Theatre.)

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BOOKS

Four Irish Generations

The Tower, by William Butler Yeats. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

Poems of Thomas Parnell, selected by Lennox Robinson; The Death of Synge, and other passages from an old diary, by William Butler Yeats; A Little Anthology of Modern Irish Verse, selected by Lennox Robinson. Dublin: Cuala Press.

ANGLO-IRISH literature falls naturally into three divisions, and possibly it will be four: up to 1800; from 1800 to about 1875: from 1875 to the founding of the Free State. The first period is represented by such people as Goldsmith or Sheridan. The second opens with Tom Moore, who is followed in the same period by such very different men as Callanan, Mangan, Banim, Carleton, Davis. This period is the result of two forces—the French Revolution and the acceptance of Anglo-Ireland by the native Irish. We see both in the rise of a peasant proprietorship, a native middle class, Catholic emancipation, the Young Ireland movement, the establishment of a system of primary education. The third period might be said to open with Yeats (born 1865): as has often been said, it represents the Europeanization of the Irish literary man. If there is to be a fourth distinct period it will be represented presently by the realists.

Without questioning if Tom Parnell is really, as Mr. Robinson says, part of "our glorious Irish heritage," we may observe how difficult it is to see any inspiration other than that of the early eighteenth century in England in such a convention as,

> "Ye nightingale! ye twisting pines!
> Ye swains that haunt the grove! . . ."

It is far more difficult than to distinguish the definite Irish influence in the pastoral idealism of Goldsmith—for Parnell is far more impersonal. There is in The Traveler or The Deserted Village the nostalgia of childhood memories. Parnell possibly owed more to Ireland and less to the inspiration of the Scriblerus Club than he knew, but one feels for all that that he could have got along very well without Ireland.

Men like Callanan, or Mangan, or Davis were in a different situation: they were as much indebted to Byron, as Banim or Carleton were to Scott, but Ireland was to them as indispensable as the highlands were to Scott or Greece to Byron. Unhappily, only one facet of Ireland's story—the incident of her political enslavement—was made known to the democratic school that came with the rise of the peasants in the early nineteenth century. Whereupon, discovering their slavery, they became propagandists to their pride. So we get the songsters of the nation and a set of novelists and ballad-makers whose integrity is proved by their politics rather than by their art. They did, however, wake the lasting interest of the nation, for the subjects they chose were immediate and personal—religion, the land, local traditions, a political idea. To discredit the writings of these men was the first task of the third period before it could go its own chosen way; and to discredit them was no easy task.

Mr. Yeats can scarcely write six pages today without reverting to that conflict. In these notes from an old diary he is naturally drawn to refer to it by the death of Synge. Synge was one of the foremost opponents—though he was not a controversialist in any way—of the political idealists who would restrict the freedom of the artist. Over his grave Yeats feels all the bitterness of a man who has seen his best friend (whom he knows for a genius) die unwept save by a few. There are some beautiful passages in this book, passages that help to illuminate much of the poet's writings, but the gloom of the central event hangs over the whole, and it does not come happily to us so near the poet's latest book of verse, The Tower, which is also heavy with the melancholy of a frustrated dream.

For if, with the victory of the Irish Literary Theatre, the conflict seemed to die down, it was merely that, as usual, the peasant-politician had adapted himself to conditions. Failing to wreck the literary revival, he became part of it and adapted it to his own ends. Yeats's poetic romances had to yield place to the social criticism, the harsh, unbeautiful satire, the photographic realism of the peasant play, or to thinly veiled nationalistic propaganda. Even Yeats himself succumbed with his little play on '98, and Mr. Robinson with his plays on Emmet and on the Fenians. When he launched his theatre Mr. Yeats committed the one tactical blunder of his career: the stage is the property of the masses, it became in Ireland not so much a stage as a pulpit, and the adventure could not but end in a good deal of bitter recrimination. The Tower is full of such acid melancholy. It is as if, too late, Mr. Yeats would admit wisdom to George Moore, would wish he had, like him, taken refuge from all irrelevant opinion in some faith.

And yet, and yet . . . how lost these young men and women seem whose names are collected in Mr. Robinson's anthology. How intelligent they appear, which is the last quality that should shine in poetry. There is here so little receuillement, so little rest, so little dreaming, so little romance. However ungrateful she may be to those who serve her, Ireland has served the poets faithfully: she has helped to give unity and stability to their verse, as she has always done to whole flocks of native Irish versifiers. But this new generation is the fruit of rancor and disillusion, and the unrest that is all over contemporary European art is in their verse also. There is unrest in Mr. Yeats's poem Sailing to Byzantium, but it is the unrest of a woman rising from a long, gentle sleep in a bed she has known from childhood, or of an old man leaving a home where he had been happy all his life. The unrest of a poet like Mr. Geoffrey Phibbs or Mr. T. C. Murray is like that of young men who have been wandering around the streets all night wishing for a brace of pillows.

SEAN O'FAOLAIN.

Political Remembrances

Presidents I've Known and Two Near Presidents, by Charles Willis Thompson. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $3.00.

PRESIDENTS I've Known and Two Near Presidents, after very nearly a decade of official and unofficial memoirs, histories and biographies, covering the Hanna-to-Coolidge epoch, is as fresh as the news in tomorrow morning's Times, and far better written. To begin with, Mr. Thompson does not set down anything which he has not himself seen and heard. In the second place, he has seen and heard a great deal. And in the third place, he writes with a brilliant, clear, cool style which is as refreshing as the summer rain.

This is not to say that Mr. Thompson's book has not got its faults. It has. The chapter on Mr. Coolidge, whom the author had never known except as a literary stylist, is an anti-climax, and its inclusion an error in judgment. What he writes

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about Mr. Coolidge is, as always, of interest, but it does not have the same freshness or relevance as the earlier chapters. Again, Mr. Thompson's personal friendship for that magnificently dynamic person, Theodore Roosevelt, takes the form of a marked predilection which makes one a little unsure of his capacity to gauge the curious inarticulation (despite the veil of noble oratory) of Woodrow Wilson.

However, the chief value of this book is its freedom from distortion. He told the public what happened, not what the public wanted to be told. The best instance of this is his description of the G. A. R.-Confederate reunion at the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. When every other correspondent was writing conventional sob-stuff about the tottering old veterans, Charley Thompson noticed that these feeble old men seemed to be quite hale and hearty, carrying on at a pace which exhausted the younger men, and raising hell at all hours. He was not afraid to say so where other reporters sent back what the public believed.

So it is with the pageant of politics. He credits Mark Hanna with being the first statesman of the modern American era, the pioneer politician to discover that industry had supplanted politics as the social centre of gravity, and the first adroit party boss to apply the principle of his discovery. Bryan appears, not as the Great Commoner, but as an opportunist whose darkest secret was the possession of a first-class sense of humor. Roosevelt is the vital, tingling, gregarious figure of the popular legend. He was real. Taft is the epitome of humorous sanity, cursed with malapropisms. His fatal remark to Roosevelt, "Yes, in thinking over the whole campaign, I am bound to say that I owe my election more to you than to anybody else, except my brother Charley," after Roosevelt had bulldozed the party into nominating his Secretary of War, is the psychological explanation of the break between the two men and of the wreck of 1912. Woodrow Wilson longed to be able to express himself as fluently in human relationships as Roosevelt, and was most delighted on the only occasion on which he was called "Woody." Harding was "Babbitt in the White House," tout court, and Coolidge, "the last of the Yankees," was an unappreciated master of the glories of the terse Anglo-Saxon style.

Taking the field broadly, Mr. Thompson attaches the greatest significance to Mark Hanna, who created an era in American politics, the era of the big campaign fund and of the industrial dominion over political phenomena. Theodore Roosevelt was his friend. For him, Mr. Thompson reserves his personal admiration and esteem. Wilson was an insoluble psychological problem, a human being unable to be human, an idealist capable of audibly wishing that the New York Evening Post would not be "so damned ladylike," a man without easy enthusiasms, without much trust in his fellows or marked ability to lead public opinion. Harding is simply an anti-climax, a "yellow-dog" nominee, the finest fruit of "the senatorial Soviet," a sham McKinley who was none the less a lovable fellow.

As one reads what Mr. Thompson says of the great political leaders of his generation, one understands the overwhelming revulsion which obsessed him with the election of Senator Harding of Ohio, which led to his retirement from political journalism and which even now, eight years later, lends edge to his paragraphs. The giants had perished from the earth. The Senate had been debased by the system of popular election into a sounding-board for wire-pullers and demagogues. The lights were dimmed and the colors faded and the savor of politics was gone. It is that which lends importance to Mr. Thompson's book. The era of Mark Hanna ended with the deliberate effort to restore it in the person of Senator Harding. Since then the United States has moved into a new epoch—that of the specialist in administration, of the engineer in politics. The old days have gone to return no more. The dollar marks of the cartoonist of Mark Hanna have yielded to the logarithms of Herbert Hoover and the big stick of Theodore Roosevelt to the economy of Calvin Coolidge. In consequence, Presidents I've Known is the finest political obituary Charley Thompson ever wrote.

JOHN CARTER.

A Monument to Bunyan

The Church Book of Bunyan Meeting, 1650-1821: being a reproduction in facsimile of the original folio in the possession of the trustees of Bunyan Meeting at Bedford entitled, A Booke Containing a Record of the Acts of a Congregation of Christ in and about Bedford, and a Brief Account of their first Gathering; with an introduction by G. B. Harrison. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $30.00.

ONLY 675 copies of this book were printed, 350 for sale in Great Britain, 300 for sale in the United States. The wonder is that any copies were printed at all. This is a gorgeous folio, measuring 16½ inches by 11.

John Bunyan, the tinker evangelist, has received many compliments from saints, apostles, priests and men of letters; but I am inclined to the opinion that he never received a greater compliment than this. Three hundred years after his birth, it has been thought worth while to reprint the original records of a Christian community in England, simply and solely because it is associated with his ever-living name and fame. Mr. Harrison in his excellent introduction describes the purpose and scope of the work. I shall save time if I quote from his opening paragraph:

"The book opens with the account of the first foundation of the church and the 'testament' of John Gifford; it includes the epistles of the first saints condemning, exhorting, congratulating their fellow-believers. It records the sufferings of the early believers, the troubles brought on the church by its members who were unequal to their profession, or who had entered it with unworthy motives; the gradual hardening of general principles into fixed rules; the growth, not without controversy, of a simple ritual; the development of a constitution from the original spontaneous community of feeling; and at length the congregation at Bedford taking its place as a recognized part of the religious system of the country, unmolested and quiescent."

I am appalled at the labor, industry, patience and zeal required to reproduce this old record in its present grandiose form. Nearly all of it is a reproduction of the manuscript, so the old clerkly pens, so many years ago gone to rust and dust, rise again. This stately tome is a marvelous monument to the genius of John Bunyan.

Outside of the Bible, the three books that have most affected the religious ideas and images of Christians are Dante's Divine Comedy, Milton's Paradise Lost, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Could three inspired writers be more unlike than the great saturnine poet of the incomparable thirteenth century, the English university scholar and radical politician of the seventeenth, and his contemporary, the self-taught exhorter, who did not know that he was one of the foremost realistic novelists of all time?

WILLIAM LYON PHELPS.

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Freedom's Centenary

The Struggle for Catholic Emancipation, by Denis Gwynn. New York: Longman's, Green and Company. $3.50.

JUST 100 years ago, in March, 1829, the Catholic Relief Bill was passed in the British Commons by a majority of 178 in a House of 462; bringing to a close fifty-one years of acute and continuous agitation for reform. Mr. Gwynn's volume has been written to supply within small compass a complete account of the struggle in England and in Ireland of the movement for Catholic Emancipation, and to indicate the varying conditions of the fight.

As early as 1756 an Irish Catholic Association was formed with the idea of bringing the grievances of the Irish Catholics before the British people—grievances some of which had their origin in a more remote history, as the dates of 1652, 1678, 1700, will suggest. An act of Parliament passed by the council of Queen Elizabeth imposed the oath of supremacy on every member of the House of Commons, by which plan every Catholic was excluded from that House; the act of supremacy which had been passed in 1559, and to which penalties for non-acceptance were attached, stated that all ecclesiastical jurisdiction was annexed to the British crown and that no foreign potentate could exercise any power or authority within the realm of Britain. These and such-like powers were exercised by commissioners on behalf of the Queen. Again in 1678, an act was passed, by the narrow majority of two votes, for disabling Papists from sitting in either House of Parliament, an exception being made in the case of the Duke of York, who had been publicly received into the Catholic Church early in 1672; while in the reign of William and Mary, in the year 1700, Parliament passed a severe act against the Catholic faith, offering a reward of 100 pounds for information against any priest who exercised his religious functions, for which he was to be imprisoned for life. These and many other such rules which today read as policies dictated by fear and supported by a spirit of aggressive vindictiveness, indicate the temper of this age, which can be further understood when it is recalled that in 1703, the Scottish Parliament passed a resolution that "the Presbyterian Church is the only true church of Christ in this kingdom." Such aspects of intolerance serve to remind us that what Edmund Burke said in his speech on conciliation —"An Englishman is the unfittest person on earth to argue another Englishman into slavery"—was true long before his eloquent mind gave utterance to the thought.

Indeed the current manners and methods of thought of Europe during this long-drawn-out conflict are equally well described by Burke when he says: "It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things that men of intemperate minds cannot be free, their passions forge their fetters." This period of 1756 to 1829 witnessed the American and French Revolutions, both of which aroused the popular mind against an undue pressure of governmental authority upon conscience. This Mr. Gwynn admirably brings out in his portraiture of the work of O'Connell, and of the way in which this leader of the emancipation movement was treated by the municipality of Dublin, the committee of the Cisalpine Club, and the English Parliament. There was nothing of the magnanimity of great statesmen or great people discernible—party passions, religious animosities, were aroused and from such an atmosphere charity is always absent.

Indeed, even the reported sayings of George IV indicate the national feelings when, in an interview with Lord Eldon, the distracted king exclaimed: "I'll go to the Baths abroad and

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NEXT WEEK

Sometime ago Ramsay MacDonald said that relations between his country and the United States were growing increasingly critical. Is the appointment of Mr. Dawes to the Court of St. James's a recognition of this fact? AMBASSADOR DAWES is the title of a paper by George E. Anderson which discusses this question. Mr. Anderson is a careful and well-informed writer, as those who have followed The Commonweal know. . . . But just where does England stand? We are happy to report that Hilaire Belloc has written, exclusively for us, a challenging article which is entitled THE PRESENT SITUATION OF ENGLAND. He says, "There are two fundamental things about any nation which determine the character of its society." We regret that we cannot divulge, at present, just what these are. . . . From western Canada comes HOMESTEADING THE CITIZEN, by E. L. Chicanot, which deals with an interesting experiment in the art of making immigrant citizens feel their new home is really a home. . . . A curious aspect of religious history in Europe is discussed by Catherine Radziwill in a paper which she has called ARISTOCRATIC COMMUNITIES. The point at issue has been widely discussed since the death of the Queen of Spain. Few people know the European background better than does the Princess Radziwill. . . . In BEAUTY FOR THE MASSES, Frederic Thompson comments on what really happens to art when it is removed from places where people live to places which they endow after they die. . . . MARSHALL FOCH OF THE PYRENEES is a touching prose poem in which the great French poet, Francis Jammes, pays a tribute to his illustrious countryman. We think you will like this for the scrap-book. . . . Finally there is a provocative but charming essay, FASHIONS IN SAINTS, by Alan Drady. Mr. Drady is a young writer who belongs to the growing group of "new arrivals" whom we have enjoyed presenting to the public. . . . The editors hope also to comment upon a matter of more than usual importance—which is not an admission that any other kind of procedure is customary on their part.

from thence to Hanover. I'll not return any more to England, let them get a Catholic king in Clarence." Again, when the Duke of Wellington came to Windsor with the bill as passed by the Commons and the Peers, and finally prevailed upon the king to sign it, he saw his monarch in a furious rage fling to the ground the pen that had traced his name on parchment.

Mr. Gwynn has done a good piece of work in astonishingly small space. It is permeated with the flavor of impartiality. Perhaps now he will favor us with a volume upon the life and times of the Great Liberator.

BOYD-CARPENTER.

The Rothschilds

Five Men of Frankfort, by Marcus Eli Ravage. New York: The Dial Press. $5.00.

SUCH a book as this swift and thrilling narrative of the fortunes of the Rothschild family serves three admirable functions, and serves them all very efficiently.

First, it is a good story. Out of the masses of material contained in Count Corti's two large volumes, Mr. Ravage has selected the most dramatic episodes and formed of them a lucid and absorbing tale. Our sympathy is aroused, as by a well-written novel, and suspense is admirably sustained, even though the hero of the action is a large family rather than a single individual. We see the humble, ambitious Meyer Rothschild in his shop at Frankfort; we follow the career of the avaricious Landgrave William of Hesse-Cassel, who plays the part of destiny together with Napoleon. We watch Meyer's five sons spread their financial nets over war-torn Europe—gradually, inexorably, with an incredible singleness of purpose; every one of their ventures is characterized by such risk and daring as make drama of the intensest kind. Nathan Rothschild wins England, James wins France, Karl carries Italy, Salomon controls Austria, Amschel guides the central house in the Frankfort Judengasse. Thus the family infiltrates a continent, outsmarting, breaking down and wearing down all resistance. Only in the third and fourth generations do Meyer's many descendants begin to perceive that life contains more than bank accounts—and with the growth of that perception, so traitorous to the austere principles of economic imperialism, comes the Rothschilds' tragic "decline." It is a story that ranks with Byron's and Napoleon's—as a story.

Secondly, the book contains a compact and palatable store of information. The facts are all there, to be grasped with great ease by a brain which knows nothing of stock markets and the higher financial arithmetic. Having read the book, even the present reviewer, innocent of any general interest in banking or bankers, feels that he can discourse intelligibly on Napoleonic economics at any suitably intellectual dinner party or gathering.

Thirdly, the book may stimulate useful reflections on the significance of the Rothschilds and of financial geniuses in general. There is something pathetic, nay dreadful, about this spectacle of blind and microscopically narrow ambitions, warping the careers of individuals and of empires into conformity with their own grotesque patterns. Mr. Ravage makes no attempt to pass any kind of judgment on his protagonists, although it is apparent that he could do so if he wished. In this respect he is probably very wise. His story speaks for itself, and will deliver through each pair of ears exactly the quantity and quality of ethical truth that its owner can receive.

ERNEST BRENNECKE, JR.

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Briefer Mention

The Yellow Book: A Selection; edited by Cedric Ellsworth Smith. Hartford: Edward Valentine Mitchell. $3.00.

THE significance of the 1890's as a period of transition in our literature has been recognized in a dozen treatises. Holbrook Jackson and Osbert Burdett have impressed the decade upon the consciousness of every student. Until recently, however, anybody who yearned for knowledge of its most characteristic literature had perforce to acquire a set of The Yellow Book. That was expensive, cumbersome and not infrequently a little tiring. Mr. Smith has therefore made a selection; and, agreeably enough, it is everything one could desire. Of course a few pieces have a merely historical importance, and a reader familiar with the material will miss this or that favorite essay. But as a whole the volume reflects the literature competently and pleasurably. Not the least of its merits are the illustrations, most of them reproductions of Beardsley drawings.

The Real Presence, or the Localization in Cultus of the Divine Presence, by A. C. Bouquet. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.60.

THE author thinks that, if Our Lord taught the doctrine of transubstantiation, then the worship of the Eucharist is the supreme and ideal form of idolatry. He is not, however, quite sure if idolatry is wrong. It may be useful in the religious twilight of mankind. He thinks it difficult to distinguish between the Catholic and Hindu ideas of worship—except perhaps, that the Hindu theories are more exact, for the distinction between "latria" and "dulia" is not practical. In the present controversy in the Church of England over Eucharistic worship he would favor tolerance. He knows little about scholastic philosophy and thinks that transubstantiation alters the atomic structure or composition of the material object. He has hardly any understanding of Catholic worship, although it is evident that he is trying to be fair and tolerant.

Toilers of the Hills, by Vardis Fisher. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

ALTHOUGH the subject-matter of Vardis Fisher's Toilers of the Hills is somewhat similar, the author of this would-be epic of the American West falls far short of the European novel both in style and in content. The language and situations which color the story of Dock Hunter's trials and tribulations in wresting wheat from barren Idaho hills, are given without sensitiveness or inspiration. The author has done but one thing: he has created a character, a selfish, hateful creature who stalks unwashed through a vain attempt to produce realistic writing.

Five-Minute Sermons, by J. Elliot Ross, C.S.C. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company. $2.00.

IN THESE busy days the Gospel must be preached, but how to preach it when the multiplication of Masses has become a necessity and time is cut to the smallest limit? To preach for five minutes is, we are told, a more difficult task than to preach for half an hour. The Paulist five-minute sermons have become famous. Father Ross adds another valuable series. Here we have an abundance of material, and if any priest may think that some of the subjects are contentious, he has plenty of choice, for 100 sermons are provided. Each one is practical and expresses one definitely developed thought.

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Book of Fordham Verse; compiled by James H. McCabe. Worcester: The Harrigan Press.

LITTLE homogeneity can be found in a volume of poetry selected from the arbitrary limits of a college monthly, so that criticism must perforce be extremely guarded. These poems, compiled by James H. McCabe, whose own works have a large, if not entirely judicious, representation, are unquestionably typical of the verse printed in the Fordham Monthly throughout the years of its publication. When one says that it seldom reaches rare peaks of excellence, there is consolation in the antithetical fact that it seldom plumbs depths of inexpertness and poverty. Mostly conventional, the poetry is singularly unaffected by new forms, and the influence of the classical is correspondingly marked. The majority of poets are of recent years, and from these ranks it can reasonably be expected that a few will mature into real artists. The work of James Marlow, George Grainger, Harold J. McAuley, F. Patrick Grady and Edward Eustace can be singled out for particular mention.

Actual Grace, by E. Towers; The Fall of Man and Original Sin, by B. V. Miller; Eternal Punishment, by J. P. Arendzen; Divine Providence, by R. Downey; Christ: Priest and Redeemer, by M. D'Arcy. New York: The Macmillan Company. $.60 each.

THESE five little volumes are a distinct contribution to the treasury of the Faith Series which "aims to present in a convenient and accessible form to the ordinary reading public an exposition of the whole body of Catholic teaching; and this not with a view to controversy, but in order to provide Catholics with that full and complete knowledge of the truths of their faith." With authors, so competent as theologians, the thirty-six volumes of the contemplated series is insured of success in its clear, expository presentation of the fundamental dogmas of the Faith.

The March of the Mormon Battalion, by Frank Alfred Golder. New York: The Century Company. $3.50.

PROFESSOR Golder's book is primarily a compilation of documents, the pièce de resistance among which is the journal of Henry Standage. This narrates the adventures of 500 Mormons who enlisted for service in the Mexican War. The record is a meaty bit of Americana. Its significance lies in the fact that the martial deed thus undertaken earned for Brigham Young the right to lead his followers into Utah.

COMMUNICATIONS

ELMER MURPHY is one of the editors of the Nation's Business.

ETIENNE GILSON, professor in the Sorbonne, is the author of Les Moralistes Chrétiens, and other books.

THOMAS L. MASSON is the author of A Corner in Women; and Why I Am a Spiritual Vagabond.

MARSHALL SCHACHT is a young poet of Massachusetts.

ROBERT SENCOURT, long a European correspondent, is the author of Purse and Politics. He is now preparing a book on the Vatican settlement.

CAPTAIN PAUL BROWN, retired United States Marine corps officer, is the author of a travel book on Haiti.

E. J. BREEN is a former Boston newspaperman.

IMELDA MORAN LOGAN is a new contributor to The Commonweal.

SEAN O'FAOLAIN is a student of Irish literature and a contributor to current periodicals.

JOHN CARTER is the author of Man Is War; and Conquest.

WILLIAM LYON PHELPS is the Lampson Professor of English in Yale University, and the author of The Advance of English Poetry; Essays on Modern Novelists; Human Nature and the Gospel, and other books.

BOYD-CARPENTER has taught in English and Chinese universities, and is recognized as an authority on oriental politics and literature.

ERNEST BRENNECKE, JR., is a lecturer on English literature in Columbia University and the author of Thomas Hardy: A Study.

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